

Melksham Town Council

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Monday 26th June 2023

PRESENT:

Councillor S Crundell (Town Mayor)
Councillor S Mortimer
Councillor P Alford
Councillor P Aves
Councillor G Ellis
Councillor C Goodhind
Councillor J Hubbard
Councillor J Oatley

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the press was present and two members of the public were present virtually

OFFICERS:	Linda Roberts	Town Clerk
	Hugh Davies	Head of Operations
	Andrew Meacham	Committee Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Joe McCann asked for an update on mobile CCTV. When is the report due, when will the CCTV be operational, what protocols will be in place and who will monitor. Councillor Goodhind advised he hoped the report would be ready by the end of the week. The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell advised that a written reply would be provided.

528/23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Cooke, Councillor J Crundell, Councillor Forgacs, Councillor Houghton, Councillor Price and Councillor Rabey.

529/23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

530/23 Questions from Councillors

Councillor Hubbard referred to a matter he had previously raised about written submissions to the meeting. The Town Clerk will provide a written reply by the end of next week (7th July).

Councillor Hubbard referred to a matter where he had previously written to the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell about an action which needed to be addressed, to which

he had received no formal reply. The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell advised that an update would be provided and policy would be updated.

531/23 Minutes

The minutes of 15 May 2023 having previously been circulated, were amended by hand by the Town Mayor, Councillor Crundell, approved as a correct record and signed by The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell.

The minutes of 22 May 2023 having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell.

532/23 Town Mayor's Announcements

The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, thanked Richard and Miriam for their work on the Market Place roundabout display. He went on to thank Richard, Terri, Councillor Mortimer and all the volunteers planting the flowers throughout the marketplace and noted that next year was an anniversary year for Melksham in Bloom.

Melksham Pride took place on Saturday last and was bigger and better than last year.

533/23 Reports from Unitary Councillors

Members received updates as follows.

Councillor Alford. Meeting of the Area Board. Jonathan Seed is new Chair, and areas of responsibility are, Councillor Alford Economy & Deprivation, Councillor Hubbard Children & Young People. Councillor Oatley Health & Wellbeing.

Mike Sankey, Chair of Local Highways, Footways Improvement Group (LHFIG)

Local Plan Review going to Cabinet early July.

Tennis Court Management working with leisure team so announcement expected soon.

Councillor Oatley. There is a petition for a 20 mph speed limit outside Melksham Oak Community School. Details and QR code on Councillor Nick Holder's facebook page.

Councillor Hubbard. The company supplying holiday activities has gone bust but majority of placements will continue.

Local Government Association (LGA) Working Group were looking at placements for young people coming into care.

He will be attending LGA Conference and invited members to email him with any areas of interest.

534/23 Cheque Signatories and Payment Authorisation

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Alford and Councillor Aves to sign cheques and make payment authorisation.

535/23 Detailed Income & Expenditure Report - Year End 31.3.2023

Councillor Hubbard raised increases in insurance, HR Consultancy, Legal Fees and Civic & Ceremonial. It was noted that Council had approved overspend

There was discussion on General Balance, reserves, the use, naming and allocation of surplus.

The report was noted. The Town Clerk to circulate papers, give a different name to the reserve and refer to Finance, Administration and Performance Committee.

536/23 Internal Auditor's Report 2022 - 2023

The question of Assembly Room Ticketing and VAT was discussed.

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

RESOLVED to adopt the Internal Auditor's Report and note that the recommendations therein have been acted upon.

537/23 External Audit 2022 - 2023 - Approval of the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements

538/23 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022-2023

It was proposed by The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Oatley, and

RESOLVED to approve the Governance Statement.

There was a recorded vote on this item as follows.

Councillor Alford – For
Councillor Aves – For
Councillor Cooke – Absent
Councillor J Crundell – Absent
The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell – For
Councillor Ellis – For
Councillor Forgacs – Absent
Councillor Goodhind – Abstain
Councillor Houghton – Absent
Councillor Hubbard – For
Councillor Mortimer – Against

Councillor Oatley – For
Councillor Price – Absent
Councillor Rabey – Absent

Totals. For 6, against 1, abstain 1.

539/23 Accounting Statements 2022-2023

It was proposed by Councillor Oatley, seconded by Councillor Alford and
RESOLVED to approve the accounting statement.

There was a recorded vote on this item as follows.

Councillor Alford – For
Councillor Aves – For
Councillor Cooke – Absent
Councillor J Crundell – Absent
The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell – For
Councillor Ellis – For
Councillor Forgacs – Absent
Councillor Goodhind – Abstain
Councillor Houghton – Absent
Councillor Hubbard – Against
Councillor Mortimer – Against
Councillor Oatley – For
Councillor Price – Absent
Councillor Rabey – Absent

Totals. For 5, against 2, abstain 1.

540/23 The Clerk is setting the commencement date for the exercise of public rights as Wednesday 28 June 2023 and ending on Tuesday 8 August 2023.

Noted.

541/23 Asset Register 2023

The Asset Register and how the figures were calculated was discussed.

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

RESOLVED to note the Asset Register, refer to Finance, Administration and Performance for clarification and return to Full Council.

542/23 Insurance Policy Renewal

Noted.

543/23 Proposed lighting for Bowmans Court to Forest Community Centre Access Road

Councillor Oatley outlined his proposal, advising that this walkway is much used and some residents had asked for lighting.

There was a wide ranging discussion

- privacy of neighbouring gardens
- the question of vandalism of the low level lights
- seeking permission from Wiltshire Council, owners of the track
- funding and possible alternative sources of funding
- whether the solar panels would receive enough daylight
- that it was intended the lights would be intermittent rather than constantly on
- whether the matter should come back to council for decision or to note only
- the effect on wildlife

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

RESOLVED to delegate the Town Clerk authority to purchase low level solar lighting up to the value of £8000 to be taken from the solar farm funding. Subject to Councillor Oatley talking to resident's in Bowman's Court, obtaining permission from Wiltshire Council, ensuring resident's privacy is not invaded, and bringing the matter back to council to note what is being installed.

544/23 Remit of Melksham Assembly Hall Working Group

Councillor Ellis set out the details of his proposal. There was general support for the proposal but some concern over the make-up and voting rights of the working group. It was suggested that the Working Group be open to all councillors and that members of the public be invited to give input. There was discussion of the scope of the project, Wiltshire Council's position on the Blue Pool and the remit of the Working Group, with some feeling the options outlined were too narrow. Some amendments were suggested and accepted by Councillor Ellis as friendly amendments

The 10pm cut off was reached during the discussions. It was proposed by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Oatley, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders and extend the meeting by a further 15 minutes.

It was proposed by Councillor Ellis, seconded by Councillor Goodhind, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

- that the Assembly Hall Working Group (AHWG) Terms of Reference be amended so the group sits under the Full Council and not Asset and Amenities Committee.
- That the AHWG would be open to all council members, with a quorum of 5 elected members.
- That, within a time limit of three months, the AHWG will consider at least 3 options including but not limited to Repurpose, Redevelop and Do Not Take Project On.
- That the AHWG will explore and provide “Ball Park Figures”.
- That a budget of £10000 be allocated from The Major Projects Earmarked Reserves for professional fees.

545/23 Christmas Light and Fair Event

There was discussion on whether the agreed increase had been £4000 or £5000.

The previous extension having expired, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Mortimer, and

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders and extend the meeting by a further 10 minutes or to the conclusion of this item if earlier.

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

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to increase the Christmas Event budget by £5000, to be met from the general reserve.

Remaining items on agenda were not reached and have been deferred to next meeting.

Meeting Closed at: 10.20 pm

Signed:

Dated: 17 July 2023