

**MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD AT MELKSHAM TOWN HALL  
ON MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2009**

**Present:** Mr Simon Bridgford-Whittick                      Mrs Adrienne Westbrook  
                 Ms Sarah Cardy    Mr Simon White  
                 Mr Geoffrey Carr    Mrs Sheila Wilkinson  
                 Mr Rod Eaton (Chairman)                                      Mrs Pam Wiltshire  
                 Mr Jon Hubbard    Mr Richard Wiltshire

Also in attendance: Councillors Mark Griffiths, Vic Oakman, Chris Petty, Louise Smith and Terri Welch.

**2009**

**1. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Announcements from the Chair**

It was asked if a report on the late night opening prior to Xmas could be included on the next agenda.

**4. Urgent Business**

The Chairman referred to and welcomed the decision by District to approve the ASDA planning application. The Mayor thanked those who attended the meeting at the District Council. It was noted that there were no reports from Economic Development or the Regional Development Agency available within the committee papers.

**RESOLVED:** It was asked if the ASDA application could be added to the Planning agenda for Monday 19 January to discuss any action which might be needed by the Town Council. Among the items to be considered are:

- Lack of comment in the Planning Officers report by the RDA and Economic Development Section.
- Section 106 agreement.
- Possibility of sending a delegation to the Secretary of State if necessary.

**5. Public Participation.**

**(a) General Matters**

There was no public participation.

**(b) Matters arising therefrom**

Therefore there were no matters arising.

**POLICY/OPERATIONAL**

**6. Budget 2009/10. To receive a recommendation from the Budget Working Group.**

A report from the Budget Working Group had been circulated with the agenda and full details of the proposed budget had been sent to all councillors prior to the meeting. The recommendations of the Working Group were:

“That the precept requirement should be exactly the same as last year, in the sum of £325,070. The Band D equivalent figure was likely to be £66.49 (£66.64 last year) but could change slightly once the final number of properties is calculated by West Wiltshire District Council”. Additionally they recommended some further items of financial control as set out below

1. That the Finance Officer attends future meetings of the Assembly Hall Working Group and presents monthly income and expenditure statements to those meetings.
2. That minutes of the Assembly Hall Working Group are considered at Policy and Resources Committee rather than at Amenity Committee meetings.
3. Work is undertaken to bring the presentation of timesheets for the Town Caretaker and his Assistant to a similar format to those being used for office staff.

Following a statement from the Chairman a motion was put forward by Councillor Pam Wiltshire seconded by Councillor White that the recommendation of the working group be approved.

An amendment was put forward by Councillor Sarah Cardy seconded by Councillor Jon Hubbard that an additional amount of £12,500 be added to the precept requirement to assist towards obtaining additional resources to be spent on improving the economic viability of the Town.

Following considerable discussion on this matter a recorded vote was called for, the result of which was as follows.

**In Favour of the Amendment.** Councillors Cardy, Hubbard and Westbrook

**Against the Amendment.** Councillors Bridgford Whittick, Carr, Eaton, White, Pam Wiltshire, Richard Wiltshire and Wilkinson.

### **THE MOTION WAS LOST**

The original motion was then put to the meeting and again a recorded vote was called for.

**In Favour of the Motion.** Councillors Bridgford Whittick, Carr, Eaton, White, Pam Wiltshire, Richard Wiltshire and Wilkinson

**Against the Motion.** None

**Abstentions from Voting.** Councillors Cardy, Hubbard and Westbrook.

As a result it was :

**RESOLVED:** To recommend to the Full Council Meeting to be held immediately after this meeting that:

1. "The precept requirement for 2009/10 be set exactly the same as last year in the sum of £325,070. The Band D equivalent figure was likely to be £66.49 (£66.64 last year) but could change slightly once the final number of properties is calculated by West Wiltshire District Council". Additionally they recommended some further items of financial control as set out below.
2. The Finance Officer attends future meetings of the Assembly Hall Working Group and presents monthly income and expenditure statements to those meetings.
3. Minutes of the Assembly Hall Working Group are considered at Policy and Resources Committee rather than at the Amenity Committee meetings.
4. Work is undertaken to bring the presentation of timesheets for the Town Caretaker and his Assistant to a similar format to those being used for office staff.

## **7. Local Authority Pension Scheme**

The Town Clerk had produced a report for consideration by councillors in respect of Employers Discretions.

**RESOLVED :** It was agreed that the Clerk would contact WALC to seek their guidance on the document before further consideration by Councillors.

## **8. West Wiltshire/Elblag Poland Twinning arrangements**

A letter had been received from Trowbridge Town Council requesting that the Town Council give consideration to the proposal regarding continuation of the West Wiltshire/Elblag Poland Twinning arrangements from April 2009 when the District Council ceases.

The suggestion is that the Twinning Charter will remain with the five towns as signatories and that Trowbridge Town Council takes the role of lead municipality for the purposes of EU recognition and other formal requirements.

Councillors also considered a suggestion, which had been received separately from the Twinning Association, that Mayors from the Five Towns each take on the presidency for one year in rotation

**RESOLVED :** The Town Council approved the above arrangements.

## **9. Wiltshire Council**

### **(i) Area Boards.**

The Town Council gave consideration to a consultation document on boundaries.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that once the new Council has been formed in April to invite someone to come and talk to the Town Council on this subject and that the invitation be extended to other local councils in the Melksham Community Area.

### **(ii) Delegation of Services.**

A document had been received providing an update on the subject of delegation of services to local councils once the new Council is formed in April.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to note this document.

## **10. Ruskin Avenue**

A letter had been received from Kate Austin a parent of a child who attends the Manor Primary School informing the Town Council of problems with parking outside the school and offering possible suggestions to alleviate the problem.

Following discussion it was agreed that Mrs Austin had raised a valid point. It was felt that there was more likelihood of achieving a successful outcome to this when Car Parking and Education comes under the jurisdiction of the new Unitary Authority. Once the new council is formed the matter should be raised with them. In

the meantime the Clerk was asked to obtain the views of the School Governors and to reply to Mrs Austin informing her of the decision.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk takes the action outlined above.

Councillor Rod Eaton declared an interest in this item and did not vote.

**11. Town Centre Carol Service.**

Councillor Terri Welch had written to the Town Council to ask if consideration could be given to a carol service on the Sunday evening prior to Christmas around the Christmas Tree and to ask the churches to be involved in putting the service together.

During discussion of this a suggestion was put forward regarding the possibility of a lantern parade and that the Lions Club may wish to be involved.

**RESOLVED:** To support the idea in principle and that the Clerk contacts the Family of Churches and the Lions Club to seek their involvement.

**12. Payments for Approval**

The Finance Officer informed the Town Council that included in the list of payments for this evening was a cheque for £24,000 being issued to West Wiltshire District Council as our contribution towards costs of installing new play equipment in King George V Play area.

**RESOLVED:** Payments were approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**13. (a) Wiltshire County Council re Bank Street Improvements**

A letter had been received from Gareth Rogers, Wiltshire County Council in response to the Town Council's request to hold off the planned works in Bank Street until the end of February to allow traders in Bank Street to benefit fully from the 'sale' period.

It was noted that the relevant Street Closure Notice was on the agenda, under additional correspondence for consideration at the Town Council meeting to follow.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to note this information.

**(b) Wiltshire County Council re Parish Improvement Grants**

A letter had been received from Wiltshire County Council informing the Town

Council of grants available to implement non-statutory improvements to countryside access and rights of way within Melksham.

**RESOLVED:** To note the information.

**(c) Wiltshire Association of Local Councils. December 2008 circular**

The above circular had been received.

**RESOLVED:** To note the above circular.