

**MINUTES OF THE MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT MELKSHAM TOWN HALL  
ON MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2009**

<b>Present:</b> Mr Simon Bridgford-Whittick	Mrs Terri Welch
Ms Sarah Cardy	Mrs Adrienne Westbrook
Mr Geoffrey Carr	Mr Simon White
Mr Rod Eaton	Mrs Sheila Wilkinson
Mr Jon Hubbard	Mrs Pam Wiltshire
Mr Vic Oakman	Mr Richard Wiltshire (Chairman)
Louise Smith	

**2009**

**16. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Chris Petty.

**17. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**18. Public Participation**

**(a) General and Planning Matters**

No members of the public were present.

**(b) Matters arising therefrom**

Therefore there were no matters arising.

**19. Questions. To receive any questions submitted by Councillors in accordance with Standing Order 21**

No questions had been received from councillors.

**20. Minutes (to approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meetings listed below)**

**(a) Full Council – 15 December 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Richard Wiltshire and seconded by Councillor Rod Eaton.

**(b) Development Control – 22 December 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Sarah Cardy and seconded by Councillor Simon Bridgford-Whittick.

**(c) Development Control – 5 January 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Simon Bridgford-Whittick and seconded by Councillor Jon Hubbard.

**(d) Policy and Resources – 12 January 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Rod Eaton and seconded by Councillor Jon Hubbard.

**(e) Town Council – 12 January 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Richard Wiltshire and seconded by Councillor Rod Eaton.

**(f) Town Development – 13 January 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Pam Wiltshire and seconded by Councillor Adrienne Westbrook.

**(g) Development Control - 19 January 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Sarah Cardy and seconded by Councillor Simon Bridgford-Whittick.

**(h) Amenities - 26 January 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Simon White and seconded by Councillor Vic Oakman.

**(i) Special Town Council - 26 January 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Richard Wiltshire and seconded by Councillor Rod Eaton.

**(j) Development Control - 2 February 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Sarah Cardy and seconded by Councillor Vic Oakman.

**(k) Policy and Resources - 9 February 2009**

These were moved by Councillor Rod Eaton and seconded by Councillor Jon Hubbard.

**21. Matters arising.**

**(i) Town Development 13 January 2009. Use of old road through Semington by taxis**

The Town Clerk informed the meeting he had contacted Wiltshire County Council regarding this matter and was informed this section of road is subject to a Road Traffic Order which prevents use by taxis. He had also contacted Melksham Without and Semington Parish Councils to obtain their views on seeking a change to the order. Semington Parish Council had objected strongly to any Road Traffic Order being amended to allow taxis through the village.

As a result of the above information the Town Clerk asked what action the Town Council now wished to take.

**RESOLVED:** After discussion it was agreed to take no further action at this time and to raise the issue again when the New Area Board is in place.

**(ii) Policy and Resources 9 February 2009.**

At the above meeting the Town Clerk had been asked to seek clarification on the role of Chairpersons at meetings. As a result he had circulated a set of guidelines he had obtained from the National Association of Local Councils.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that councillors consider the information provided and that it be an agenda item at a future meeting if any councillor felt it was necessary.

**(iii) Any other matters arising**

***Development Control – 19 January 2009:***

Under public participation at this meeting the matter of Union Street being subject to a temporary suspension of one way traffic whilst works were undertaken to improve Bank Street had been discussed.

Councillor Sarah Cardy raised concern that today was only the first day of this suspension and there is a concern amongst residents at the amount of traffic, especially large lorries using this road.

Concern was also raised at the amount of traffic having to turn right into Lowbourne from Union Street, which is a blind corner and quite dangerous.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to raise this issue with Wiltshire County Council as a matter of urgency and that additional signage be sought.

***Amenities – 26 January 2009:***

Item 9 - Tree in the Town Hall car park.

The Town Clerk informed the meeting an order has been raised for a contractor to remove the tree and for the stump to be ground out. The work was due to take place on March 2/3<sup>rd</sup>.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to note this information, but to make the contractor aware of the flower bulbs in this area.

Item 4(b) Litter/Dog Bins:

Councillor Hubbard asked if these have been installed yet.

**RESOLVED:** The Town Clerk informed the meeting the bins have been ordered and will follow this matter up to check when installation will take place.

***Policy & Resources – 9 February 2009:***

Item 18 – Sainsburys Footpath

It was asked if a reply had been received from Sainsburys regarding the Town Council's request to maintain the footpath adjacent to their store.

The Clerk informed the meeting to date he had not received a reply. However he had heard from West Wiltshire District Council stating they have no plans to extend the cemetery car park.

Item 25 – Forest Community Centre

Councillor Vic Oakman updated Councillors on the latest position regarding the new Forest Community Centre. He informed the meeting the Wiltshire Football Association have contacted the Football Foundation and there will be a meeting on 5 March to see if this matter can be moved forward.

## Item 32 – Correspondence (German Twinning Association)

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that due to an advert being placed in the Melksham News there has been interest by several members of the public to resurrect the German Twinning Association. The Clerk asked councillors how they wished to progress with this matter.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to place this item on the next Policy & Resources agenda.

A discussion ensued regarding minute numbering which was causing some confusion to some councillors.

**RESOLVED:** The Town Clerk agreed to investigate this matter.

## 22. Mayor's Announcements

These were on the table for perusal.

## 23. Matters arising

Councillor Hubbard asked why the prospective Conservative MP candidate had been invited to the breakfast launch of the Food Festival and the Employment and Trade Seminar in Melksham.

Councillor Richard Wiltshire explained that the above person had attended the breakfast launch as he is a member of the Food Festival Committee as a food supplier and he had asked to attend the Employment Seminar after seeing the advertisement in the paper.

## 24. Urgent Business

Councillor Richard Wiltshire explained the Town Council had received an invitation to a West Wilts Interfaith Group meeting on 15 March if anyone wished to attend.

Councillor Hubbard explained that an ongoing litter problem in Pembroke Road seems to have been resolved, however he asked if the Town Council would look into providing a new bin in the area, as this problem may return if no litter bin is provided. It was also asked if a bin could be placed in the Ruskin Avenue/Thackeray Crescent area.

**RESOLVED:** To place an item on the next appropriate agenda.

The Town Clerk explained that unfortunately the Assistant Town Caretaker's Van has been off the road for a while now due to mechanical failure and he had sought the opinion of a local garage owner of the options available to the Town Council (**see attached report**).

On considering the options Councillors felt that the work should not go ahead and that an alternative vehicle be sought within the budget available. The matter was delegated to the Clerk, Mayor and Chairman of Policy and Resources to conclude.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk takes the appropriate action.

## **25. Committee System**

The Town Clerk had produced a report on the current committee structure (**see attached**) which was introduced in May 2008. The Clerk had asked for the views of councillors on how they felt the new system was working and whether any changes were needed. The Clerk recommended that Councillors consider this report and instruct officers on any changes they would like to implement.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That no changes be made to the current system
2. That minutes be circulated to all councillors as soon as they are available after meetings.
3. That as much use as possible is made of e mails when circulating agendas and minutes in future.

## **26. Cooper Avon Fire Service**

Councillor Geoffrey Carr had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda as he was concerned at the safety implications to residents of Melksham with the withdrawal of the Cooper Avon Fire Service.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to write to the Chief Fire Officer to ascertain what risk assessments have been conducted for the town and factory in the light of the withdrawal of the service.

## **27. Public Participation Guidelines.**

The Clerk had produced a set of guidelines (see attached) to be made available to members of the public for their information.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to accept the proposals and to make posters/cards available for members of the public.

## 28. Reports from Councillors:

### (a) Report from “Supporting Employment and Trade in Melksham” seminar 12 February 2009 - Richard Wiltshire

Minutes of the above meeting had been produced (**see attached report**) with various action points. Councillor Richard Wiltshire asked how the Town Council wished to move forward with this matter.

It was agreed this had been a useful meeting and a good opportunity for local people to voice their concerns and make suggestions to how things could be improved in the town. The meeting had raised a number of points for action, all of which were endorsed by councillors.

During further discussion the following points were raised:

- Business Link have been holding various seminars in Wiltshire for local people regarding the credit crunch and giving advice where necessary. A lot of the items covered by the recent seminar in Melksham have been covered by Business Link and it would be useful to feed the minutes of this meeting to them. It was thought it would be useful if Business Link could hold a breakfast meeting to help local businesses in Melksham.
- At the Seminar it had been noted that businesses in Bowerhill were not aware of what was available in the town. A local landlady had informed the meeting she had a map available that can be reproduced to circulate to the various businesses within the Melksham area.
- It was noted that approximately 17 years ago Leekes had agreed to put up a town map in their store informing their customers of what was available in the town. Apparently Leekes are prepared to put up this map on their site, if this had been agreed previously with the Town Council.
- Councillor Jon Hubbard informed the meeting he had produced a Project Initiation Document regarding empty shop windows and asked if anything had been done to move this item forward. Maggie Giddings, Assistant Town Clerk/Project Officer explained that this had been put on hold to await the outcome of the above meeting.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed:

1. A working group be formed to move this matter forward. Councillors Sarah Cardy, Jon Hubbard and Adrienne Westbrook and those Councillors who attended the original meeting were appointed to the group. ***It was agreed to invite Melksham Without and other parish councils to join the working group.***

2. That an approach be made to Business Link for the suggested meeting and if agreed that the information is circulated to all those who were originally invited to the above meeting and to also place an advertisement in Melksham News.
3. To investigate if the original paperwork regarding Leekes is still available in the Town Hall.
4. The production of a town map for circulation to local businesses to be discussed by the working group.

**(b) To receive any reports submitted since the issue of this agenda**

No further reports had been received.

**29. Police Report**

Inspector Cullop had produced a report, circulated at this meeting. Subjects covered included: Neighbourhood Policing – current priority and actions taken and proposed improvements; what changes are proposed for the Melksham community area once the new unitary authority is up and running; crime figures; local crimes/incidents and the decision to wind-up Melksham 1<sup>st</sup> and the need to establish a new Community Area Partnership.

The meeting was then opened up to Councillors to ask questions:

It was asked if Neighbourhood Watch leaflets could be made available to members of the public, as there seems to be a lot of interest from members of the public. However, due to reorganisation in the force several years ago a lot of the local Neighbourhood Teams disbanded as it was felt they were not being supported by the Police.

Inspector Cullop felt it would be appropriate to try and organise a meeting for anyone interested, in the meantime he would pass on Neighbourhood Watch leaflets to the Town Clerk.

Councillor Rod Eaton explained he would update the analysis of the crime figures on the current quarterly basis to give us a whole year of crime figures for the Melksham area following the presentation by the Police of the March figures.

Discussion ensued regarding the installation of new CCTV in Melksham.

The Town Council thanked Inspector Cullop for his report.

### **30. Finance**

#### **(a) Payments for approval**

**RESOLVED:** Payments were approved.

#### **(b) List of Payments since last Town Council Meeting**

**RESOLVED:** The above list of payments were approved.

#### **(c) Banking arrangements. The Finance Officer will give a verbal report.**

At the request of the Finance Officer this item was withdrawn.

### **31. Correspondence**

#### **(a) Wiltshire County Council re Melksham Town Centre Weight Limit**

A letter and map had been received from Wiltshire County Council regarding their investigations of weight limits for Melksham Town Centre and suggesting the areas the weight limit would cover. The views of the Town Council were now being sought.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to welcome this information and agree to the areas outlined.

#### **(b) Wiltshire County Council re Melksham Town Centre Improvements-Project Board**

A letter had been received from Wiltshire County Council regarding a meeting on 10 March of the Project Board.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed Councillors Rod Eaton, Terri Welch and Geoffrey Carr would attend this meeting together with the Town Clerk.

#### **(c) Wiltshire Association of Local Council-February 2009 circular**

The above circular and been received.

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

#### **(d) Wiltshire County Council Re Pedestrian Enhancements – Bank Street**

A letter had been received from Wiltshire County Council in response to the Town Council's query asking why the planned road works in Bank Street were extended to 7 weeks rather than 3 as originally planned.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to note the information provided subject to the comments raised earlier in the meeting regarding Union Street.

**(e) West Wiltshire/Elblag Twinning Association Re AGM 26 March 2009**

A letter had been received from the above inviting the Town Council to a meeting on 26 March.

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