

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
HELD AT MELKSHAM TOWN HALL
ON MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2009**

Present: Mr Simon Bridgford-Whittick Mrs Adrienne Westbrook
Mr Rod Eaton (ex officio) Mrs Pam Wiltshire (Chairman)
Mrs Louise Smith Mr Richard Wiltshire (ex officio)
Mrs Terri Welch

Also in attendance Councillors Jon Hubbard and Peter Dauncey

2009

47. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Sheila Wilkinson, Chris Petty (Simon Bridgford-Whittick substituting), Mark Griffiths.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Peter Dauncey who was elected Councillor for the Spa Ward on 3 September 2009.

48. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

49. Public Participation

Scott Aldersley, Lewington Close attended the meeting along with other residents of Lewington Close to ask for the Town Council's support in their endeavours to erect a play area in Lewington Close. Currently residents have to cross a busy main road to gain access to the nearest alternative park.

Mr Aldersley explained of those residents surveyed, 99% were in favour, Selwood Housing, landlords for the close are also fully supportive. Homes in the nearby vicinity will also be asked for their opinion.

Councillor Hubbard explained he had been made aware of resident's plans and stated they were not asking for funding, but for the support of the Town Council in asking for the Assistant Town Clerk/Project Officer's time in helping residents investigate the feasibility of the project at this stage.

50. Matters arising

To consider the above comments under the agenda item later in the meeting.

51. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

52. Minutes of the previous meeting

These were approved at the Town Council meeting on Monday 13 July 2009.

53. Matters arising

Item 38 - Empty Shops: The Town Clerk was asked to write and thank the landlords who had kindly let the Town Council use their empty shop windows to display various items of artwork and information regarding organisations within the town.

Item 40 – Town Inspections: It was asked if any progress had been made in this area of work. The Town Clerk informed councillors that unfortunately, due to their current workload, the caretaking staff had yet to make a start on this new initiative. However it is hoped to start soon.

54. Town Plans

Tim Martiensen, Interim Head of Regeneration, Wiltshire Council and Councillor Richard Beattie, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development attended the meeting to discuss the Town Council's vision for Melksham and thanked the Town Council for a tour of the town prior to the meeting.

Tim Martiensen explained that any vision for Melksham needs to be firmly embedded in the planning system. Wiltshire Council are currently developing their Local Development Framework on how the County will develop in the future with regard to housing and employment etc, obviously the larger towns in Wiltshire have been earmarked to accommodate the bulk of new housing and infrastructure along with employment.

The Regional Spatial Strategy notes that other towns in Wiltshire also need to be considered for redevelopment etc. Melksham has been identified as being quite vulnerable within the local economy as there are some areas of deprivation.

Wiltshire Council are strongly supportive of the principle of town plans as a means of encouraging community led regeneration.

Melksham has already started in this process however there is still more work to be done before any document can be adopted into any supplementary planning guidance. Wiltshire Council are currently developing a template with Warminster as the pilot project and they have already undergone this process and their scoping and vision document is considered a template for towns in Wiltshire to use. The approximate cost of producing such a document is £12,000, unfortunately, there is no money available from Wiltshire Council to help with these costs. Any subsequent regeneration projects that may emerge as a result of the planning process will need to be self funding/self financing and further partners sought to help with funding.

Wiltshire Councillor Beattie explained his background in regeneration and was supportive of Melksham forming a Town Plan.

Councillors agreed the vision document needs to take account of the wider area of Melksham ie Bowerhill, Beanacre, Berryfields etc. It was felt if the A350 link road to Bowerhill was created this would open up an opportunity for more employment land, there needs to be scope for businesses to grow.

Councillors explained the Melksham Plan commissioned by Melksham 1st and undertaken by Colin Davis Associates approximately 3 years ago had never been adopted into a Town Plan, as was other consultation work undertaken by Melksham 1st (not fully completed) this needs to be firmly embedded into the planning system.

RESOLVED: It was agreed:

- Tim Martiensen would ascertain from Spatial Planning whether they had received the Town Plan by Colin Davis Associates.
- The Town Clerk would locate the Community Plan completed by Melksham 1st and any other consultation documents and pass on to Tim Martiensen.
- Once further information has been received to put on a future agenda for consideration on the way forward.

55. Town Map

Graham and Lisa Ellis attended the meeting to present the map of businesses they had produced for councillors to peruse. They felt that it would look excellent in an empty shop, the Tourist Information Centre and Leekes. Lisa explained that she wanted to put every business on the map and has tried to keep it flexible so that it can be kept as up to date as possible in order to avoid people commenting that it was out of date. Graham stressed that they were happy for people to contact them with updates.

It had been printed in Chippenham for £35. They felt some of the shops displaying it may enter into a contract i.e. you agree to display - you agree to update it, and they would be happy to send PDF versions with updates.

Copies should have a shelf life of 3 months. It was agreed to put a date on to make people aware of when the map was last updated.

Considerable discussion ensued when the following points were raised by councillors/staff.

- Initially it was hoped to display the map in Church Street car park, TIC, King Street car park, where other maps are currently displayed. Recently communication had been received from the company responsible for the

current maps asking if their maps were still in place, as they are planning to update them. It was felt that further investigation was needed and that the Town Council should help in this if at all possible.

- The Town Clerk reported that Nicki Lewis and one of her colleagues from County Hall had visited the Town Hall regarding improving the street scene and they are going to send some information about grant money that might be available. The subject of the map was mentioned and it is possible that some money could be available.
- Can the map go on the Melksham website? Graham - Yes it is possible, but it is a huge document.
- Can the map be displayed on Bowerhill? Suggestions were Knorr Bremse canteen, Christie Miller and the Wiltshire School of Gymnastics. They will have to pay for one, it just about works on A3. Graham stated that copies of the PFD file can go round and if people want to print it out on A3 or larger it can be done.
- Clarification was sought on how this should now be taken forward since Lisa and Graham have produced the map through the Chamber of Commerce and the impression must not be given that the Town Council is taking it over. In reply Graham stated that the wording states they have done the work and produced it and that is fine, they are so busy and do not have the official background so would be very grateful if this was taken over because the Town Council is well positioned to move this forward.
- There is an initial cost of circa £200 to get this project underway to obtain a stock. Beyond that a decision will be needed to decide how this should be paid for, whether by Chamber of Commerce etc. The Mayor agreed to fund this £200 from his allowance. It was suggested that a request be made to the Area Board for match funding.

Lisa concluded by stating that this is her gift to Melksham and feels other businesses should give to Melksham as well and should be encouraged to do so. Through the Chamber of Commerce we need to get more proactive. If some of the businesses could display the map they would be giving something back to Melksham.

Councillors thanked Graham and Lisa for the excellent work they had done and it was

RESOLVED:

- (i) To place on record The Town Council thanks for the hard work Graham and Lisa had undertaken in producing an excellent map.
- (ii) To help where possible with the siting of the map.

- (iii) To meet the initial costs (£200) of providing maps from the Mayor's allowance and to seek financial support from the Area Board.
- (iv) To investigate, through the Chamber of Commerce, the possibility of individual traders paying for additions/corrections applicable to them.
- (v) To review the success of the project early in the new year.

56. CCTV

The Town Clerk had written a report (**copy attached**) asking councillors to support the recommendations of the CCTV working group i.e.

- The committee agrees in principle with the provision of a system as outlined in the report.
- That an amount of £18,600 in the Town Development budget be earmarked for this project.
- Instructs the Clerk to take the necessary steps to seek additional/alternative sources of funding.

The Town Clerk explained if the Committee approves the recommendations a report can be submitted to the next meeting of the Area Board seeking funding from Wiltshire Council.

During the discussion on this matter:

- i) It was pointed out that the Town Council needed to make people aware the new system is to help everyone in the town and not just traders.
- ii) That there are CCTV cameras at King Park Primary School which cover parts of the Adventure Centre and the Cricket Pavilion and that the Clerk should check that the Police are aware of this.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to support the Clerk's recommendations.

57. Play Day – 5 August 2009

A report had been produced by the Assistant Town Clerk/Projects Officer on the success of the Play Day event, which was well supported. A recommendation from the Chairman that a similar event be held next year and to approach the Area Board for funding was supported.

It was also suggested that the Extended Services Team be contacted as they have access to further funding.

RESOLVED:

- i) To support a Play Day event next year and to try and obtain match funding from other partners.
- ii) That the matter be placed on a future agenda of the Area Board for consideration.
- iii) That a provision is made in the budget for 2010/11 of £2000.

58. West Wilts Show

The Assistant Town Clerk/Projects Officer had produced a report outlining the benefits, problems encountered and her thoughts on the future of the show.

The committee thanked the Assistant Town Clerk for all her hard work in organising the marquee this year.

Concern was raised by Councillors regarding the value to Melksham of continuing a Town Council presence at the show in its current format and councillors also felt that it was a mistake to hold this year's event when the schools were still open.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to let the organisers know that the Town Council would want to consider its involvement in a future show in the present format.

59. Development of a Children's Play Area in Lewington Close

After considering the comments made during Public Participation it was:

RESOLVED:

- i) To agree to the Assistant Town Clerk/Project Officer supporting the group in investigating the feasibility of a play area.
- ii) That the organisers be advised to contact Vic and Edna Oakman who had carried out a similar project at Methuen Avenue Play Area.

60. Verbal Update from the Assistant Town Clerk/Project Officer on Heritage Open Days and feedback from traders regarding Late Night Opening

The Assistant Town Clerk/Project Officer explained the Heritage Open Days event will be taking place this weekend, more organisations are taking part this year and hopefully it will be well supported. The old town stocks will be available outside the Town Hall if anyone wished to have their photograph taken in them.

With regard to Late Night Opening a meeting had taken place with local traders who were very enthusiastic and asked that the event take place the same day as the Xmas Fayre and if this could be on a Friday. They were not aware that the Christmas

Fayre was organised by local volunteers and not the Town Council and therefore the date could not be changed this year which is Saturday 28 November.

It was hoped next year traders would be able to take ownership of this event and make a grant application to the Town Council.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

61. Late Night Opening

Councillor Jon Hubbard had asked for this item to be considered. He explained that Late Night Opening would be a good marketing opportunity for the town and asked if the Town Council would be prepared to put £500 towards the event to pay for entertainment and advertising/marketing. Those traders involved would need to match fund any monies the Town Council put forward to fund the event, e.g. traders could pay for a feature in the Melksham News thus saving officer time in fund-raising.

Other ideas for the event included local schools providing bands to play in various areas of the town, 'Spot the Oddity', hog roast, roast chestnut vendors, lantern parade and the Christmas window display.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that:

- i) The Town Council would put £250 towards the event and that the Budget Working Group be asked to liaise with the Finance Officer on which budget heading could be used.
- ii) That the Budget Working Group consider any further requests for funding up to a maximum of £500.

62. Town Criers Competition.

The meeting was informed this event is planned for 4 July 2010 the same day as the Food Festival. Councillor Peter Dauncey, Town Crier explained he has already had promises of sponsorship for the event.

Officers recommended, however, that a contingency of £500 be set aside for the event as there may be additional costs involved if Wiltshire Council starts charging for Street Closure Orders.

RESOLVED: To recommend that the Policy & Resources Committee be asked to support the Town Crier's Competition being held on 4 July 2010 and that a budget contingency of £500 be made.

63. Annual Civic Service. Place Road

Councillor Richard Wiltshire explained that during the Mayoral procession of the Annual Civic Service in June to St Michael & All Angels Church the amount of weeds in Place Road was noted by several in the procession.

Unfortunately this road is private and therefore is the responsibility of residents. Councillor Richard Wiltshire asked if the Town Council could write to residents and invite their comments on how this matter can be resolved.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk writes to the residents accordingly.

64. Town Centre Improvement Scheme

(i) Information from Colin Davis Consultant

The Town Clerk reminded councillors that at the last meeting of this committee Councillor Richard Wiltshire suggested that the Town Council consider employing Colin Davis to carry out further design work on the Market Place and the area north of the town bridge to be included in the Town Centre Improvement Scheme/Town Plan. The matter was referred to Policy and Resources Committee who asked the Town Clerk to ascertain the likely cost of this as a first step.

The information before this evening's meeting was for information only because an agenda item would need to be placed on the next agenda of Policy and Resources.

The Town Clerk had contacted Spencer Drinkwater from Wiltshire County for his view. He felt it important that any decision should be deferred until after the next meeting of the steering group, when officers from Wiltshire Council will be in attendance and can consider the request.

RESOLVED: It was agreed Councillor Richard Wiltshire would attend the next Steering Group meeting to ascertain Wiltshire Council's views and to put an item on the next Policy & Resources Committee agenda to consider feedback from the steering group and to consider the budget implications.

(ii) Correspondence from Brian Warwick and Robin Henderson

Mr Brian Warwick and Mr Robin Henderson had written to the Town Council expressing their views on what improvements should be made to the Market Place after reading an article in the Melksham News and considering the display in the Town Hall.

It was felt that members of the public were of the opinion that the design was still on display for consultation and they needed to be made aware the design is finalised, however the cosmetics of the scheme are yet to be determined.

After discussion it was:

RESOLVED:

- i) To seek the Steering Group's views at the next meeting on the possibility of holding an open meeting for members of the public later in the year, attended by representatives of the steering group, to outline why the scheme has reached the stage it has and to seek views on any finer points of the scheme.
- ii) Write to Mr Warwick and Mr Henderson thanking them for their interest, but informing them that unfortunately the design for the Market Place has been finalised and consultations have been ongoing for nearly 10 years and compromises reached due to the financial constraints.

To let them know of the possibility of holding the above meeting. In regard to the parking issues mentioned in Mr Warwick's letter that the Clerk informs him that Melksham Town Council have already contacted Wiltshire Council with regard to free car parking in the town.

65. Pedestrian Crossings Lowbourne/Library and bottom of Union Street/Bath Road

Correspondence had been received from Davina Griffin a resident of Union Street stating that the length of time available to cross pedestrian crossings in Lowbourne (by the Library) and Bath Road at end of Union Street is not long enough and asked if the Town Council would support her request to Wiltshire Council to have this situation remedied.

RESOLVED: The Town Council fully supported this request and agreed to contact Wiltshire Council accordingly.

66. English Heritage/Historic Conservation Areas

Information had been received regarding the state of some conservation areas in the south west and the launch of a 'Conservation Areas at Risk' campaign to get residents, local groups and councils working together to improve these special places before it is too late.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to refer this item to a future meeting when the subject of Town Plans is discussed.

67. Payments for Approval.

RESOLVED: Payments were approved.