

MINUTES

Meeting: Melksham Area Board
Place: On-Line Meeting
Date: 22 September 2021
Start Time: 7.00 pm
Finish Time: 9.00 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Phil Alford (Chairman), Cllr Nick Holder, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Jack Oatley,
Cllr Mike Sankey and Cllr Jonathon Seed

Also Present:

Dave Thomas - Head of Highways Asset Management and Commissioning
Peter Dunford – Community Engagement Manager
Kevin Fielding – Democratic Services Officer
Sergeant James Twyford - Wiltshire Police

Total in attendance: 26

| <u>Minute No..</u> | <u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u> |
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| 19 | <p><u>Chairman's Welcome, Introduction and Announcements</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everybody to the Melksham Area Board meeting.</p> <p>The Melksham Area Board members were introduced.</p> <p>The following Chairman's Announcements contained in the agenda pack were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Update – seven months into the build programme work is progressing well, still on schedule to open by Autumn 2022. The planning consultation period for the development of Melksham House ended on 10 September. If the application is successful, the demolition works will begin early in 2022. • Riverside Walk - resurfaced with Mendip Grit Sand with a grant from the Area Board of £5,000 towards total costs of £5,429. Contractor: PB Services (Wiltshire Ltd), Calne • Whitley Stores Grand Opening Event on Saturday 9 October at 1-5pm |
| 20 | <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p> |
| 21 | <p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 September 2021 were confirmed as the correct record |
| 22 | <p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Youth Grant Funding Application: 4Youth “TeenTalk” Young Peoples Counselling <i>Cllr Jon Hubbard & Cllr Jack Oatley would both abstain from the vote</i></p> <p>Community Grant Application: West Wilts Model Car Club for the purchase</p> |

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| | <p>of a replacement computer to run club racing events Cllr Phil Alford <i>would abstain from the vote</i></p> |
| 23 | <p><u>Fire & Rescue Update</u></p> <p>Station Manager Dave Geddes was unable to attend.</p> <p>Points made from his written update included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection - On-going interaction by Protection Team members with Local Authorities, Private landlords and tenants regarding fire safety-related matters: external cladding systems; fire detection and warning systems; fire resisting doors (& self-closers); combustibility/fire resistance of construction materials; commercial and residential sprinklers systems and water-mist suppression systems. • On-call Firefighter Recruitment - As a paid position, on-call firefighters commit anywhere between 40 to 120 hours per week, during which time they must be able to respond to the station immediately. <p>Anyone over 18 years old can apply (although you can also apply once you are 17½) you must be able to respond and attend the fire station within 5-8 minutes, you have a good standard of physical fitness (i.e. you are generally active), and you must have the right to work in the UK.</p> <p>Further information on becoming an On Call Firefighter can be found at www.dwfire.org.uk/working-for-us/on-call-firefighters/ or should you have any questions, you can call 01722 691444.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) is again supporting the national Chimney Fire Safety Week, which runs this year from 30 August until 5 September. <p>Organised by HETAS – the Heating Equipment Testing and Approvals Scheme – as part of the Government’s Fire Kills campaign, the awareness week calls for homeowners to act responsibly and get their chimneys swept by an approved sweep. This prevents chimney damage, and, in worst cases, household fires.</p> <p>For more top tips for staying fire safe at home, please visit www.dwfire.org.uk/safety-at-home.</p> |
| 24 | <p><u>Police Update</u></p> <p>Sergeant James Twyford gave an update on behalf of the Trowbridge Community Policing Team.</p> |

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| | <p>Points made included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASB, Graffiti and Theft – King George V Playing Field, Melksham - Reporting of issues remained low and the evidence suggested that Social Media perception was making the issue appear more pronounced. Two Suspects had been identified as being responsible for the recent Graffiti and Theft incidents; enquiries to bring the matter to Court were underway. • Primrose Drive and Nature Reserve, Melksham - ASB Surveys and a Resident’s Meeting were utilised to get a more detailed picture of the issues. Specific detail remained sparse; no further reports of issues had been received. This was being monitored, but would not be a specific priority, moving forwards. • Community Messaging - Keep up to date with the latest news and alerts in your area by signing up to our Community Messaging service – www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk <p>The Chairman thanked Sergeant Twyford for his update.</p> |
| 25 | <p><u>Tackling anti-social behaviour</u></p> <p>Cllr Mike Sankey outlined the proposed installation of a CCTV camera which would be a cost-effective way to monitor the continuing anti-social behaviour in the Melksham Skate Park area.</p> <p>Colin Goodhind - Deputy Mayor, Melksham Town Council described how this project would be part of wider efforts to establish a CCTV system across the town centre.</p> <p>Cllr Jack Oatley reported on his role leading the street-based youth work team and said he was fully supportive of the proposal.</p> <p>Sergeant James Twyford – Wiltshire Police advised that the camera system would help the Police hugely.</p> <p>Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr sponsored initiative from Cllr Mike Sankey awarded £990 towards a CCTV camera in the Melksham Skate Park area <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for their input and look forward to seeing the system in operation.</p> |

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| 26 | <p><u>Climate Strategy and Natural Environment Plan consultations and Ash Dieback announcement</u></p> <p>Cllr Phil Alford advised that Ash Dieback or Chalara Dieback of Ash was a disease which was expected to lead to the decline and death of most of the ash trees in Britain. 90% of woodland Ash trees nationwide were likely to be affected over the next five to 15 years.</p> <p>Ash Dieback was already affecting trees in all parts of Wiltshire, and the council, along with other large landowners was working to address the impacts of the disease.</p> <p>In trees alongside the highway, rights of way and in public spaces, this could pose a risk of injury to people and damage to property. There was an urgent need for all landowners to identify Ash trees growing alongside the highway, public rights of way and in public spaces that were showing signs of this disease and remove or significantly reduce these trees in order to avoid risks to the public or to property.</p> <p>A short film was shown explaining the phenomenon of Ash Dieback.</p> <p>Climate Strategy and Natural Environment Plan consultations</p> <p>Cllr Phil Alford advised that:</p> <p><u>Climate Strategy</u></p> <p>This strategy had been developed after Wiltshire Council acknowledged a climate emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030. The document had deliberately been kept simple to encourage a wide readership. The UK Climate Change Committee estimates that local authorities could influence one third of emissions in their area. This made public engagement and buy-in from organisations and businesses critical to tackling the other two thirds – as well as advocating for strong government action. This high level strategy set out the Wiltshire Council objectives and areas of focus while remaining flexible.</p> <p><u>Our Natural Environment Plan - Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy</u></p> <p>This strategy looked at the future for Wiltshire’s natural environmental assets focussing on the need to address climate change adaptation and mitigation, halt and reverse biodiversity loss and contribute to the health and wellbeing of Wiltshire’s residents.</p> |

'Blue infrastructure' means water courses such as rivers, lakes, canals, ponds and wetlands, while 'green infrastructure' covers plant life such as fields, woodlands, hedgerows and parks, and the GBI Strategy would set a clear vision, goals and principle to guide delivery through partnership working. Having a strong GBI would help mitigate against the effects of climate change through nature-based solutions such as, increased water retention in the land to reduce the risk of flooding, maintain and improve biodiversity, and help to provide improved access to the countryside.

Infrastructure in the Melksham Community Area includes:

- Streetscene and countryside services including waste collection, recycling, flood alleviation, rights of way improvement, air and river quality monitoring.
- A programme of service delegation and asset transfer from Wiltshire Council to the Town Council for local control for parks, play areas, allotments and toilets.
- Urban tree planting; action against dog fouling and littering; a new country park at Shurnhold Fields; investment in new facilities at King George V Park; support to wildlife and biodiversity at Conigre Mead Nature Reserve; support to the Wilts and Berks Canal restoration.
- Preparation of Melksham Neighbourhood Plan to balance new development with protection for the environment.
- Supporting sustainable transport including investment through CATG in pavements, dropped kerbs, safe crossings, traffic calming.

Decisions

- **That the Melksham Area Board notes the draft Climate Change and Green and Blue Infrastructure strategies and urges residents, organisations and businesses across the Community Area to contribute to the Consultations ahead of the closing date of 17 October 2021.**
- **That the Melksham Area Board commits to work with organisations, residents and businesses across the Community Area to create a more sustainable Melksham.**

The Melksham Area Board also noted the new "Wilts can do" campaign on climate change.

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| | <p>The campaign would be focusing on the seven main delivery themes that the council had identified as priorities in its draft Climate Strategy, in order to lower carbon emissions in Wiltshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Built environment • Waste • Green economy • Energy generation, storage and distribution • Natural environment, food and farming • Carbon neutral council <p>People could show their support on social media by using the campaign #WiltsCanDoThis when sharing any posts or ideas, and following the council's channels where regular posts will be made: @WiltshireCouncil on Facebook, @WiltsCouncil on Twitter.</p> |
| 27 | <p><u>5 Year Highways Plan</u></p> <p>Dave Thomas - Head of Highways Asset Management and Commissioning at Wiltshire Council outlined the 5 year highways plan for the Melksham community area.</p> <p>The full report was contained in the agenda pack.</p> <p>Points made from the Area Board members included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That it was surprising how little of Melksham town roads were included on the list. • That roads were resurfaced, but pavements were then left in a poor state <p>It was noted that areas not included in the report could still be submitted to the Wiltshire Highways Department for consideration.</p> <p>Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Melksham Area Board noted the list contained in the report and passed to the Community Area Transport Group (CATG) to progress further. <p>The Chairman thanked Dave Thomas for attending and outlining the report.</p> |

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| 28 | <p><u>Sub Group reports</u></p> <p>Community Area Transport Group – Cllr Jonathon Seed</p> <p>Points made by Cllr Jonathon Seed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The notes of the meeting held on Thursday on 9 September were agreed. • It was noted that there were no spending decisions needing to be ratified at this meeting. • That funds were still available for local schemes. <p>Health and Wellbeing Group – Cllr Nick Holder</p> <p>Points made by Cllr Nick Holder included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That discussions at the 2 September meeting had included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Home Volunteers Support to Stroke Survivors Primary Care Network inc. future estate plan Age Friendly Melksham inc. survey and event Young Carers event • Support was recommended for a grant application from Melksham Talking Newspaper requesting £500 towards costs • That two people had now expressed an interest in becoming the Area Board Older Persons and Carers Champion. <p>Cllr Holder reported on the roll-out of the COVID booster programme.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Cllr Seed and Cllr Holder for their respective updates.</p> |
| 29 | <p><u>Proposal for a special "Older Persons theme" meeting of the Area Board to be held on 22 October 2021. To include the recruitment of an Older Persons Champion for the board</u></p> <p>Peter Dunford – Community Engagement Manager sought the Melksham Area Board members approval for a special meeting of the Area Board provisionally entitled “Age Friendly Melksham: survey results and action planning”.</p> <p>The event was outlined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be held on Friday 22 October 2021, 9.30am for 10am start with 1pm |

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| | <p>finish, at Melksham Assembly Hall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event to be hosted by the Melksham Area Board with the support of Age Friendly Melksham. • Invitations to be made to representatives of seniors groups across the Melksham community area together with stakeholders from relevant local agencies. • Presentations to include the results of an age friendly baseline survey and a keynote presentation from The Centre for Ageing Better. • Roundtable discussion for action planning. • The appointment of Older Person and Carers Champion would be progressed via an advert in the Melksham News requesting written expressions of interest. <p>Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Melksham Area Board approves the outline of this special older persons meeting of the Area Board to be held on Friday 22 October 2021 at the Melksham Assembly Hall <p>The Chairman thanked Peter Dunford for his proposal and asked him to proceed with the event planning.</p> |
| 30 | <p><u>Proposal for a consultation on "Area Board Priorities" to be held on 8 December 2021</u></p> <p>Peter Dunford – Community Engagement Manager outlined a proposal for a consultation on "Area Board Priorities" to be held at the Area Board meeting on Wednesday 8 December 2021. This would help the board to direct its limited resources towards key issues of local concern over the coming 4 year political cycle.</p> <p>Some suggested priorities for action include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the environment (inc. climate change, biodiversity, built environment, public open space) • Health and wellbeing (tackling isolation and loneliness; care and support) • Youth engagement and positive activity opportunities • Supporting low income individuals and families |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing anti-social behaviour <p>Decisions on priorities to be reached based on data and discussions with stakeholders.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the Area Board were keen to hear people's views on themes that should be covered at the meeting.</p> <p>Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Melksham Area Board approves this consultation on "Area Board Priorities" to be held at the area board meeting on 8 December 2021 <p>The Chairman thanked Peter Dunford for his update.</p> |
| 31 | <p><u>Applications for Grant Funding</u></p> <p>Community Grants</p> <p>Decision 2385 Melksham Squadron awarded £5,014 towards additional training and development and capital expenditure support</p> <p>Decision West Wilts Model Car Club awarded £955 for the purchase of a replacement computer to run club racing events <i>Note: Cllr Phil Alford abstained from the vote</i></p> <p>Decision Keevil Parish Council awarded £379 towards a paved area at Banfield recreation ground</p> <p>Decision Melksham Town Council awarded £345 towards a new cabinet for the defibrillator at the Pavilion in King George V park</p> <p>Youth Grants</p> <p>Decision 4Youth awarded £5,000 towards "TeenTalk" Young Peoples Counselling <i>Note: Cllr Jon Hubbard and Cllr Jack Oatley both abstained from the vote</i></p> |

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| | <p>Health and Wellbeing Grants</p> <p>Decision Celebrating Age Wiltshire awarded £1,500 as match funding for Yr 2 of the project</p> <p>Decision Melksham Talking Newspaper awarded £500 towards costs</p> |
| 32 | <p><u>Public Questions</u></p> <p>There were no public questions.</p> |
| 33 | <p><u>Future Meetings</u></p> <p>The next Melksham Area Board business meeting would be held on Wednesday 8 December 2021, 7pm – venue to be confirmed.</p> |
| 34 | <p><u>Close</u></p> |