

MINUTES

Meeting: Melksham Area Board
Place: Melksham Library, Community Campus, Market Place, Melksham,
SN12 6ES
Date: 12 September 2023
Start Time: 6.15 pm
Finish Time: 8.50 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

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

Wiltshire Council Officers

Richard Rogers – Strategic Engagement & Partnership Manager
Ella Crerar – Communications and Marketing Manager
Caroline LeQuesne – Area Board Delivery Officer
Dominic Argar – Assistant Multimedia Officer
Matt Hitch – Democratic Services Officer

Total in attendance: 40

<u>Minute No..</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
28	<p><u>Guided Heritage Walk Around Melksham</u></p> <p>The Chairman thanked Paul Carter, the Chairman of Melksham and District Historical Association for leading the heritage walk around the town, which was attended by nearly 50 people.</p>
29	<p><u>Chairman's Welcome</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed attendees to the meeting. Members and officers then introduced themselves.</p>
30	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies for Absence had been received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Nick Holder • Inspector Andy Lemon • Cameron Osborn – Apprentice Democratic Services Officer
31	<p><u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u></p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr Jon Hubbard, seconded by Cllr Jack Oatley, it was resolved to make the:</p> <p><u>Decision</u> To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 14 June 2023, as a true and correct record.</p>
32	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>In relation to agenda item 12, Cllr Jon Hubbard and Cllr Jack Oatley declared that they were trustees of 4Youth. They did not participate in the debate, or vote on, the two grant applications from 4Youth.</p>
33	<p><u>Chairman's Announcements</u></p> <p>The Chairman noted that Wiltshire's Local Plan set out the framework for housing infrastructure for employment for the next 15 years. It was noted that there would be a consultation event on the Local Plan in Melksham at the Community Campus on Wednesday 4 October between 3pm and 7pm. There would also be an online webinar covering the whole of Wiltshire between 6:30pm and 8:00pm on Tuesday 10 October. Further information was on pages 7-9 of the agenda pack.</p> <p>He also read out a statement on Melksham House, which has been attached to these minutes.</p>

34	<p><u>Partner Updates</u></p> <p>The Area Board noted the partner updates as set out in the agenda pack; these were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiltshire Police – Neighbourhood Team pg. 11-34 • Community First pg. 35- 37 • BSW Together (Integrated Care System) pg. 39-80 • Healthwatch Wiltshire pg.81 • Wiltshire Police - Road Safety – Agenda Supplement 1 pg.1-13 • Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) Agenda Supplement 1 pg.15-21 • Melksham and Bradford on Avon Primary Care Network Agenda Supplement 2 <p>The Area Board also received an update from Social Prescriber, Sasko Spirovski, and Dr Amy Gately from Melksham and Bradford on Avon Primary Care Network (PCN). The representatives explained that the PCN involved collaborative working between the three local practices. Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joy app would soon be available to allow patients to self-refer to local health services and it was envisioned that this would assist GPs in making the most effective use of their consultation time. • The PCN were recruiting a Clinician Associate. • Queries were asked about the PCN’s view about the need for a medical centre at Verbena Court, given proposals for a new care home on the site. It was also asked whether staff had been moved from Giffords Surgery to Melksham Hospital. It was highlighted that the PCN had stated that they did not see the need for a new medical practice on the site in a letter written on 26 October 2022 in relation to a variation on a S106 agreement. The PCN emphasised the importance of communication with developers and health providers to ensure that there was appropriate health infrastructure in place for new developments. • It was noted that Melksham Hospital was not suitable for lone working and challenges had been faced with the PCN’s Estate Toolkit Delivery Programme.
35	<p><u>Special Schools Developments</u></p> <p>Matthew Look, SEND Place, Planning and Commissioning Programme Lead, provided an overview of the requirement for special needs school provision in Wiltshire, before going to provide detailed information about work to transform Melksham House into a special school for children with social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). The Area Board were informed that, although Wiltshire had a number of special schools, it was reliant on the independent sector for SEMH provision, meaning that children sometimes had to be placed outside of the county. He explained that Melksham House would provide 42 places for primary age children, and between 25 and 35 secondary age children,</p>

	<p>when it opened in September 2024.</p> <p>The Area Board thanked the Programme Lead for providing valuable insight into the progress at the school. During the discussion, points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary age children would be based on the ground floor at Melksham House, with secondary age pupils on the first floor. There would be no classrooms on the second floor as the building was listed, so it was not possible to make the necessary alterations to the staircase. • It was envisioned that primary age children would be at Melksham House full time, although there might be a slightly more flexible model for secondary age pupils. • In response to a query about whether the school’s hall could be used by the wider community outside of school hours, the Programme Lead said that he would make further enquiries. The Chairman noted that he would welcome the opportunity to hold an Area Board in the building. • When asked about how places would be allocated, the Programme Lead noted that children with an Education, Health and Care Plan would have their needs assessed by an expert panel and that parental preference would also be taken into consideration. • The Area Board stated that they thought it was fantastic that the future of an important historical building could be secured through the provision of a vital public service.
36	<p><u>Heritage and Culture</u></p> <p>Ruth Butler, Heritage, Education and Digital Engagement Officer at Wiltshire Council, provided information about the Explore Wiltshire app, a new, free, easy to use location-aware app that featured information about historical landmarks, cultural sites and events that have helped to shape Wiltshire’s towns and villages. It included interactive maps, walking trails, hunts and challenges, plus photographs, audio and visual clips. She explained that the app would support the Wiltshire Towns Programme, aiming to increase the footfall in market towns. It was designed to allow town and parish councils, or local heritage organisations, to add their own trails and marketing messages. The officer highlighted that Melksham had a fantastic industrial heritage, including Cooper Tyres and Avon Rubber that could be included on the app.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Area Board thanks the officer for her presentation and said that they would welcome the opportunity to register Melksham on the app. • The Chairman highlighted that Melksham had more listed buildings than Bradford on Avon. • The Area Board expressed regret that they had not been included in the first tranche of towns to be added to the app. It was clarified that the Market Town Team had drawn up the list of the first 10 towns and that local stakeholders, such as heritage groups, the town council and Area Board could contact them to join the app.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Engagement and Partnerships Manager had been discussing Melksham being the next town to join the app with Wiltshire Council's Heritage Services Manager and there was complete agreement that he should now express the Area Board's wish for this to happen. • The Chairman of Melksham and District Historical Association, Paul Carter, said that his organisation would be keen to be involved. • Material that could potentially be included on the app about Melksham included information about Victorian philanthropist Rachel Fowler and Great War stories from the Melksham Remembers project. • It was highlighted that Melksham Football Club were amongst the oldest in the Southern League and it might be possible to advertise Melksham Food and River Festival on the app. <p>Heather Perry, Conservation and Museums Advisory Service Manager at Wiltshire Council, provided information about different ways in which Melksham could promote its heritage, including contributing to historic collections, or opening its own museum. She explained that there were 40 museums in Wiltshire, operating a variety of different operating models. Some museums were entirely volunteer run including Aldbourne Heritage Centre, which was based in a former public toilet. It was noted that there was an accreditation scheme to start collecting items and that her team were available to assist with issues such as governance, visitor experience and managing collections.</p> <p>The Chairman of Melksham and District Historical Association agreed that consideration should be given to the best way to display the town's history. He reported that his association had first tried to set up a museum in 1962 and had made further attempts in the 1990s. It was also noted that the Melksham Hoard, a collection of Bronze Age artifacts were displayed in Devizes.</p>
37	<p><u>Area Board Priority Update</u></p> <p>Cllr Phil Alford noted that the planning inspector had agreed a new right of way in Melksham linking Murray Walk to an area near Woodrow. He also noted that Wiltshire's Cabinet had, earlier that day, agreed an additional £10 million investment in Highways and Transport .</p>
38	<p><u>Local Highway and Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG)</u></p> <p>The Vice-Chairman paid tribute to the former Melksham Without Parish Councillor, Don Millard, who had sadly passed away.</p> <p>On the proposal of the Vice-Chairman, seconded by Cllr Jack Oatley, it was resolved to make the:</p> <p><u>Decision</u></p>

	<p>1) To close the following Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9-22-1 Melksham Lighting off Hazelwood Road • 9-22-6 Melksham Signing to Sandridge Farm <p>2) To add the following Issue to the Priority Schemes List with funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9-22-21 Melksham Snarlton Lane Crossing Point (£1,454.58) <p>3) To add the following Issue to the Priority Schemes List without funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9-23-13 Steeple Ashton Sandpits Lane pedestrian access to playing field
39	<p><u>Grant Applications</u></p> <p>The Area Board noted the budgets remaining for allocation at the meeting and heard from representatives in attendance who gave a brief overview of their project followed by any questions by the Area Board. It was noted that the full list of applications for the meeting was included in Agenda Supplement 1.</p> <p>Community Area Grants</p> <p><u>West Wiltshire Radio Requesting £1,875 Towards Transition to Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB)</u></p> <p>In response to queries from the Area Board, the applicants confirmed that they would target 3,500 listeners if they were able to provide Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB). They were a not-for-profit company and would broadcast in Melksham. They had been awarded £1,250 by Bradford on Avon Area Board and were due to apply to Trowbridge Area Board. During the discussion, some members raised concerns about the schedule being Bradford on Avon centric and the wider benefit to Melksham over other stations.</p> <p>On the proposal of Cllr Jon Hubbard, seconded by Cllr Phil Alford it was resolved to make the:</p> <p><u>Decision</u> To refuse the application from £1,875 by West Wiltshire Radio towards the transition to digital audio broadcasting.</p> <p><u>Reason</u> <i>Insufficient evidence was presented to demonstrate the additional benefits to residents in the Area Board's area.</i></p> <p><u>Meadowbrook Community Interest Company Requesting £1,600 Towards Improvements to their Entrance Track and Car Park Area</u></p>

On the proposal of Cllr Alford, seconded by Cllr Hubbard, it was resolved to make the:

Decision

To award Meadowbrook Community Interest Company £1,600 towards improvements to their entrance track and car park area.

Reason

The application met Community Area Grant Criteria 2023/24.

Older and Vulnerable Adults Grants

Wiltshire Music Centre Requesting £1,500 Towards Celebrating Age Wiltshire

On the proposal of Cllr Hubbard, seconded by Cllr Jack Oatley, it was resolved to make the:

Decision

To award Wiltshire Music Centre £1,500 towards Celebrating Age Wiltshire.

Reason

The application met Older and Vulnerable Adult Grant funding criteria for 2023/24.

Youth Grants

Cllr Hubbard and Cllr Oatley did not participate in the debate, or vote on, the applications from 4Youth South West.

4Youth South West Requesting £5,000 Towards Remote Village Street-Based Youth Work

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Alford, it was resolved to make the:

Decision

To award 4Youth South West requesting £5,000 towards remote village street-based youth work.

Reason

The application met Youth Grant criteria for 2023/24.

4Youth South West Requesting £5,000 Towards Detached Youth Work Melksham

	<p>On the proposal of the Vice-Chairman, seconded by Cllr Alford, it was resolved to make the:</p> <p><u>Decision</u> To award 4Youth South West requesting £5,000 towards detached youth work in Melksham</p> <p><u>Reason</u> <i>The application met Youth Grant criteria for 2023/24.</i></p>
40	<p><u>Urgent items</u></p> <p>There were no urgent items.</p> <p>Future meeting dates were confirmed as:</p> <p>7:00pm – 9:00pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 6 September 2023 • Wednesday 6 March 2024 • Wednesday 22 May 2024 <p>It was noted that the next meeting on 6 December 2023 would be a special meeting about All Things Roads.</p>

Melksham House Update

10th Sep 2022

Work to refurbish Melksham House is continuing to progress well. The refurbishment of the external fabric of the building is nearing completion. The buildings original masonry has been carefully restored by a team of specialists. The scaffolding has recently been removed, revealing the restored exterior.

Work to restore and modernise the building's interior is now well underway. External landscaping works will also be progressed in the coming months.

The council are working with the contractor to ensure the building meets the needs of the end users. We hope the planned refurbishment of Melksham House will be completed early in 2024.

The end user has been identified as the SEND and Inclusion service. Melksham House will be used as a registered education provision for primary and secondary aged pupils, the majority with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). The service is aimed at children and young people who cannot access 'mainstream' schools due to social, emotional, mental health and medical needs.

A registered education provider is being sought. It is anticipated that the building will be available for a 'soft opening' from Easter 2024, once the education-specific adaptations are completed in early 2024. The education provision will open fully from September 2024.

Natasha Gumbrell

Capital Projects Service Lead

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