

NEWS RELEASE

8 December 2021

For immediate release

Future plans for Melksham to be discussed at council meeting

A report will be presented to Wiltshire Council's cabinet next week that outlines options to support Melksham to continue to grow and prosper into the future.

The council's Cabinet will be asked to release £2.8m funding, to go towards the £2m already in place, to refurbish and redevelop the Melksham House site, and create flexible co-working accommodation and a multi-purpose space for the community, while retaining its heritage. The council was unsuccessful in securing funding from the Government's Levelling Up Fund for this purpose, so Cabinet is being requested to allocate the additional funding that was set aside for Melksham House to unlock the site's potential.

If the additional money is allocated, refurbishment work will provide flexible office and meeting room spaces, and the community hall at the rear of the building will be restored to create activity spaces. The improvements would include modern sustainable technologies such as LED lighting, air source heat pumps and photovoltaics.

A scheme for the redevelopment of the Melksham House was given planning consent in October this year.

To look at the town in a more strategic way, and ensure its assets fully realise their potential, the council is also looking to establish a Place Board, in partnership with Melksham Town Council. With sites such as the Blue Pool and the library no longer being required when the campus opens, the board would look to ensure the best use

is made of publicly-owned assets for the benefit the town. If approved, a portion of funding will also go towards demolishing the Blue Pool building when Melksham Community Campus opens next year. The future of the site itself is not known at this stage, but more opportunities and options will be available to the council if the building is demolished.

Cllr Phil Alford, Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfer, said: “With the construction of Melksham Community Campus continuing to make great progress, it’s essential that we strategically plan for the future of the town, alongside our partners. The campus will be a fantastic facility right in the heart of the community, but its existence will leave other valued sites unoccupied. Therefore, we want to work together to develop a vision that benefits the people and businesses of the town and the local area.

“The campus and our plans for Melksham House will hopefully just be the start, and we’re looking forward to working collaboratively and setting out our ambitions.”

The Cabinet meeting takes place on 14 December, and the full agenda and associated reports can be found at

<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=13774>

Ends.

Notes to editors:

For more information contact the communications team at communications@wiltshire.gov.uk.

For political comment:

Conservatives: Phil Alford phil.alford@wiltshire.gov.uk

Liberal Democrats: Ian Thorn ian.thorn@wiltshire.gov.uk

Labour: Ricky Rogers ricky.rogers@wiltshire.gov.uk

Independent: Ernie Clark ernie.clark@wiltshire.gov.uk