

MINUTES

Meeting: MELKSHAM AREA BOARD
Place: Shaw Primary School, Corsham Road, Shaw, SN12 8EQ
Date: 28 July 2010
Start Time: 7.00 pm
Finish Time: 8.56 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Jonathon Seed (Chairman), Cllr Rod Eaton (Vice-Chairman) and Cllr Mark Griffiths

Cabinet Representative – John Noeken (Resources)

Wiltshire Council Officers

Andy Conn - Head of Waste Management Services

Marie Gondlach – Democratic Services Officer

Abbi Gutierrez – Community Area Manager

Niki Lewis – Service Director

Town and Parish Councillors

Melksham Town Council – Terri Welch, Chris Petty

Atworth Parish Council – E Gale-Sides, Mavis King, and Charles Boyle (clerk)

Broughton Gifford Parish Council – Paul Wiltshire

Great Hinton Parish Council – George McDome

Melksham Without Parish Council – Mike Mills, Elizabeth Bean, Mary Jarvis (clerk),
Margaret Mylcheet (Assistant Parish Officer)

Seend Parish Council – Joan Savage

Semington Parish Council – Paul Bowyer, Ron Robinson

Yeevil Parish Council – Myra Link

Partners

Wiltshire Police – Inspector David Cullop

Wiltshire Fire and Rescue – Mike Franklin

Members of Public in Attendance: 35**Total in attendance: 64**

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>	<u>Action By</u>
1.	<p><u>Chairman's Welcome, Introduction and Announcements</u></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to Shaw School.</p> <p>The Chairman introduced Councillor John Noeken (Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for Resources) who was in attendance for this meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman then introduced Councillor Linda Conley (Wiltshire Council portfolio holder for waste) and all the Wiltshire Council members in attendance as well as Niki Lewis (Service Director).</p> <p>The Chairman reminded those present of the two events having taken place before the start of the meeting, both of which were included further on in the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Wiltshire Council consultation on options for future waste collection and recycling services, - the opportunity for residents to highlight areas where community payback teams could work <p><u>Chairman's Announcements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorry parking update At the special meeting on 15th June 2010 the Melksham Area Board resolved to accept the opinion of Melksham residents and called on the Cabinet members of Wiltshire Council to take notice and to close with immediate action the King Street Lorry park to all commercial vehicles. That resolution has since been taken up and acted upon by Wiltshire Council. Since the closure there had been no report of major issues regarding lorries parking in the Melksham area but the Chairman gave reassurance that the board was keeping a watchful eye for any arising issues. Other arrangements for buses and coaches were being looked into. • Council tax payment – response to issue raised by TARA It had been reported to the board that some residents had complained about forceful debt collecting for Council tax arrears. The Chairman explained that this was not an issue the board could intervene in and the matter had been referred to the appropriate officer at Wiltshire Council; however the board could facilitate discussion on the issue should it be required. • Local transport scheme funding allocation The Chairman summarised the information provided in the agenda 	

	<p>and was pleased to announce that the Chairman of the Community Area Partnership had accepted to help with the Community Area Transport Group and would facilitate the meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Payback – call for “grot spots” The Chairman expanded on the information available in the agenda and invited residents to use the opportunity offered to them to identify “grot spots” in their area. “Grot spots” could be reported directly to the Community Payback team through the “feedback”, or to the Community Payback project coordinator Tracy Geiran on 01793 534 259 or tracy.geiran@wiltshire.probaton.gsi.gov.uk or to the Melksham Community Area Manager, Abbi Gutierrez on 01225 718 443 or abbi.gutierrez@wiltshire.gov.uk. The Chairman also proposed to identify the Melksham King Street car park as a “grot spot” as reported by local residents. • Parking Strategy consultation As explained in the agenda the chairman highlighted the fact that the consultation started on 12th July and would end on 3rd September 2010. He encouraged everyone to take part in the consultation. Comments could be submitted on line at http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal. Reference copies of the report were available from all libraries. • Leisure review The Chairman informed all present that a Leisure review consultation was also taking place and he invited everyone to take part on http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wilts-leisure-facilities-review.htm. He pointed out that the information available in the proposal would seem to indicate that Melksham was in a rather good position with the following proposed to take place within the next three years; new swimming pool, new leisure centre and a large grant to the Wiltshire School of Gymnastics. The supplementary pack tabled at the meeting included details about a Grant application which was to be considered with the four applications already listed on the agenda, and partner updates that were received after the agenda was published. 	
2.	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillors Roy While, Jon Hubbard and Stephen Petty and from Kevin Fielding, Democratic Services Officer.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Councillor Rod Eaton, as mayor of Melksham, declared a personal</p>	

	interest in any items relating to the town.	
4.	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>Exceptionally three sets of minutes had to be considered at the meeting;</p> <p><u>Decision:</u></p> <p>1. The minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2010 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>2. The minutes of the meeting held on 26th May 2010 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman with the following amendment: (minute 30 refers, page 7 of 15) Your Local issues</p> <p>Points made from the floor included:</p> <p>Many Parishes would prefer speed indication devices not hand held speed guns on a rolling programme.</p> <p>3. The minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman after it was confirmed that the fact that buses and coaches would also be excluded from the King Street car park (as all commercial vehicles) had been made clear at the time the board had voted on the issue.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Partner Updates</u></p> <p>Melksham Community Area Partnership (MCAP): Chris Holden summarised the brief report tabled at the meeting and highlighted on-going work including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The launch of the MCAP website on 1st June (www.melksham.communityarea.org.uk); • The meeting of the Community Safety group on 29th July at 7.00 pm at the Melksham Town Hall; • The opportunity for communities to have a say on the design and content of the Community Plan. <p>The board advised people to check details with their Parish Clerks and contact the authors of “local blogs” if they spotted any inaccuracies. The Chairman pointed out that the MCAP was mostly made up of volunteers, apart from the administrator, and that everyone should engage in a dialogue with them to help develop</p>	

	<p>the website and the information available.</p> <p>Wiltshire Police Inspector David Cullop referred the meeting to the report contained within the agenda and did not wish to add anything further as he was aware of the sizeable agenda faced by the board, however he invited all present to ask question if they wished.</p> <p>Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Michael Franklin highlighted instances in which people may not be aware of the WF&R's involvement such as the 43 homes which were visited for fire home safety checks and the 101 incidents attended on behalf of partners. He then invited all present to ask questions about the update report included within the agenda.</p> <p>Melksham Town Council Councillor Chris Petty, as newly elected Deputy Mayor, was invited to present any updates from Melksham Town Council.</p> <p>Parish Councils Melksham Without Parish Council felt that the main subject they could provide an update on would be better addressed under the Local Issues item.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Your Local Issues</u></p> <p>a. Response to Bowerhill Sports Field and Youth Facilities survey</p> <p>Councillor Mike Mills, Chairman of Melksham Without Parish Council, was pleased to report the overwhelming response to the survey was that the land should remain in recreational use. He also explained that young people and pupils had been consulted and the amount and quality of responses received had amazed and delighted the Parish Council.</p> <p>He stated that the Parish Council fully supported the exclusion of the land required for the link road between the A350 and Lancaster Road roundabout from the agreement. Following a query from the floor he confirmed that the existing changing / youth building would have to be pulled down but that money to replace it would be part of the transfer and planning permission had been granted.</p> <p>Councillor Mark Griffiths commended Melksham Without Parish Council for their effort.</p> <p><u>Decision:</u></p> <p>To approve the transfer of the football pitch land at Lancaster</p>	

Road Melksham, extending to approximately 5.34 hectares (13.2 acres) to Melksham Without Parish Council in the sum of £1 and otherwise in accordance with the Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

b. Concerns about Councillor-led initiative

The Chairman gave reassurance that concerns had been heard and registered and the board was fully aware of the sensitivity of the issue.

Councillor Mark Griffiths pointed out that no matter where or who the grant request came from, anyone and everyone could speak at the Area Board meeting it was considered at.

Decision:

To keep the Area Board updated on any development on the issue as and when possible.

c. Any Other Urgent Questions of Public Concern.

The Chairman invited Councillor Mark Griffiths, as the Unitary member for Melksham Without North, to report to the meeting the problems faced by residents of Snarlton Lane due to the utilities work being carried out for a sizeable housing development to the east of Melksham.

Councillor Griffiths expressed his frustration at having been unable to meet with representatives of the utilities companies, who had been invited to attend the Area Board meeting, or the developers to find a solution to the existing problems. He summarised the upheaval faced by residents of Snarlton Lane such as limited access, noise pollution, damages to properties and loss of trade for local businesses but felt these stories would be better told by the residents themselves.

The Chairman invited residents of Snarlton Lane to explain the problems they were facing. Many residents welcomed the opportunity and expressed a range of concerns, issues and feelings including the following:

- The fact that residents had initially been told Snarlton Lane would not be affected by the development, yet seemed to be the only area affected;
- The issue of an already narrow lane being made even narrower due to a trench being dug up and heavy vehicles parked on site and all the safety issue this brought such as:
 - Access and exit of the lane being made near impossible for residents themselves, let alone

	<p>emergency vehicles, refuse collection lorries and mail deliveries,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The danger for pedestrians and cyclists as highlighted in two separate instances (a young girl nearly being nearly knocked off the pavement and an accident involving a bicycle), ○ The heavy vehicle traffic which created a lot of noise and loss of quality of life with regular 7.30 am start, as well as damages to some properties on the lane where signs of subsidence were appearing, ○ Frustration due to a lack of co-ordination for the work carried out by utilities companies which may lead to a trench being dug up four times. <p>Councillor John Noeken and Niki Lewis expressed dismay at the level of health and safety risks being highlighted by the residents and pledged to bring the issue to the attention of the relevant Wiltshire Council Corporate Directors for immediate action if possible.</p> <p><u>Decision:</u></p> <p>To ensure any further work by utilities companies in Snarlton Lane is delayed until proper discussion with all parties involved have taken place and the issues are resolved.</p> <p>Note: Since the meeting Wales and West utilities have agreed not to start the planned gas main upgrading in Snarlton Lane on 9th August 2010 and an alternative route to serve the Persimmon development is being investigated.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Council and Partner Items</u></p> <p><u>a. Waste consultation</u></p> <p>Andy Conn, Head of Waste Management Services, gave a brief overview of the Wiltshire Council waste consultation.</p> <p>He explained that Wiltshire Council had inherited four different waste collection schemes which meant that changes were required to ensure that the same service was provided to all Wiltshire residents. In addition land fill tax was set to increase from £48 per ton in 2010 to £80 per ton in 2014 and there were strong incentives to reduce land fill use and increase recycling.</p>	

He explained that the proposal was to offer each household in Wiltshire an alternate weekly collection for household rubbish and black box recycling (i.e. tins, glass and paper). There would also be a fortnightly collection of plastic bottles and cardboard recycling, a new service in Melksham and the west of the county. The garden waste service would be retained for the west of the county and offered to residents in the rest of the county on an “opt-in” basis.

He pointed out that the proposal sought to balance the best service possible whilst minimising costs. It should be considered as an “invest to save” scheme with a simple formula of: increase recycling = decrease land fill = decrease land fill tax. It should also be remembered that the cost of the proposal was higher than the current cost but that new services were being offered, and that this was still less than the cost of weekly collections.

The Chairman then invited questions and comments.

In response the following was explained:

- The landfill capacity should be sufficient until 2015 to 2020;
- It was not envisaged that Wiltshire Council would purchase landfill sites because sites were now owned by private companies, not the council. There also was a decrease in demand by the public as well as the private sector therefore less investment was expected in the future, although the Wiltshire clay vale and its mineral extractions sites were likely to attract some interest;
- The kerbside collection of recyclables could be a financially viable option as the contamination rate (mixing of different recyclables) was only of 1% (10 times less than some authorities) which reduced the cost of sorting when reaching the recycling centre, and the risk for the recyclable products of being rejected by the processors. In addition local authorities could face for penalties under a national scheme called the Landfill Allowances Trading Scheme (LATS) and landfill taxes and trading cost were ever increasing;
- A significant proportion of waste was being burned to generate energy. Some of the non-recyclable waste was being sent to the incinerator plant near Slough. A proposal was also being considered for a contract with the MBT (mechanical biological treatment) Westbury plant to produce RDF fuel (Refuse derived fuel) by drying, salting and shredding waste;
- The LGA (Local Government Association) and local authorities, including Wiltshire, had been lobbying supermarkets to reduce the weight and amount of non-recyclable plastic used in packaging; although the outcome

	<p>may not always be noticeable by the consumer it did matter when weighing landfill waste!</p> <p>WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) was also actively working to develop sustainable products and use resources in a more efficient way;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the proposal be accepted the provision of local recycling bring sites (village hall car parks, schools, etc) would have to be evaluated. Some sites were so successful that they had to be emptied every other day; Wiltshire Council would aim to maintain as many sites as financially viable to support communities in their effort to recycle. <p>Mr Conn invited people to take part in the consultation. Leaflets were available at the meeting summarising the proposals and with detachable freepost slip, on which residents could record their support or opposition to the proposals.</p> <p><u>b. Library review</u></p> <p>Niki Lewis, Service Director for Communities, Libraries, Heritage & Arts gave a presentation on library services.</p> <p>Last year, following the budget consultation, libraries and heritage unfortunately had come very low in the list of priorities.</p> <p>A review of library services was now taking place to help achieve the £500K of savings required from the service’s budget within the next two years. It was also felt that the amount of savings required could increase due to national financial pressures. It was hoped that the cuts would not affect front line services.</p> <p>A gradual drop in library usage had been noted across the county despite an increase in the number of memberships. For example the Melksham library had seen a drop in usage of 9%, yet an increase of 2% in computer usage. On the bright side Melksham library could take pride in its very successful after school homework club.</p> <p>The review was looking at library services and how it could be delivered in future in the County. Mrs Lewis encouraged people to take part in the review and use the chance to give their views on how the library services could be delivered in the Melksham Community Area.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Grants & Area Board Budget</u></p> <p>Applicants that were present were invited to speak on their application, following which consideration was given by the board</p>	

to the five funding applications made to the Community Area Grants Scheme. As mentioned above four applications were included in the agenda and one was tabled at the meeting which the Chairman agreed to consider as an urgent item as the application had been sent before the deadline but had not been received by the Community Area Manager.

Decision

Bowerhill Residents Action Group was awarded £2,000 towards the development of a picnic area near the Kennet and Avon canal.

Reason

The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria for 2010/11 and would help improve the environment to encourage people to use the canal footpath for leisure including walking and cycling.

Decision

Atworth Parish Council was awarded £600 towards the renovation of the copse of pines between Mount Pleasant estate and the A365.

Reason

The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria for 2010/11 and would support the considerable community desire for improvement of this area.

Decision

The board agreed Atworth Parish Council's request to withdraw the application.

Decision

Melksham Without Parish Council had applied for £332 towards a new parish council notice board.

Reason

The grant was refused as it was considered the cost of parish councils' notice board should be met by Parish Councils.

Decision

	<p>Melksham Choral Society was awarded £900 towards a choral concert at Melksham Oak school with the condition that this was a one-off contribution.</p> <p><u>Reason</u></p> <p><i>The application met the Community Area Grant Criteria for 2010/11 and would support the enhancement of the cultural image of Melksham in the wider community and the external image of the town.</i></p>	
9.	<p><u>Cabinet Member Questions</u></p> <p>Councillor John Noeken, Cabinet member for Resources was pleased to witness such public involvement in the Area Board. He briefly presented his portfolio which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • human resources and organisational development; • ICT; • procurement and commissioning; • customer services; • shared services team; • business management programme; • business transformation (systems thinking/lean); • legal and democratic services; • councillor development; • registration service and coroners. <p>He pointed out that his portfolio mostly covered “behind the scene” work such as improving the response time to queries by members of the public, answering the phones quicker, improving the invoicing and procurement systems, etc. All these improvements were driven by a desire to lessen the costs; for example £150M were currently being spent on purchasing services, savings on services could mean that the council tax does not always have to rise.</p> <p>The workplace transformation project included issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping four main hubs for council business rather than the 1000 + buildings Wiltshire Council owned at the time; • ensuring that the 5500 staff and 7000 school staff were provided with the necessary equipment, such as ICT, to enable them to work flexibly. <p>Councillor Noeken was assisted by two portfolio holders, Councillors Chris Cochrane (ICT, Information Management and Business Transformation) and Allison Bucknell (Customer Care), to</p>	

	<p>help him meet the targets set within his portfolio.</p> <p>Over the next five years 25% of spending cuts were anticipated, which is why there was a need to be cautious and to strive to keep costs down whilst maintaining frontline services as much as possible.</p> <p>Councillor Noeken pointed out that Wiltshire Council was making the best possible use of resources in ways such as undertaking payroll functions for the Police in Wiltshire, as well as looking into sharing services with other authorities when applicable.</p> <p>In answer to questions from the floor he explained that a saving of £8M had been realised since the move to a unitary council, and that another £9M saving was expected year on year from procurement, however £3.5M in grants had already been lost in the current financial year and more cuts were expected. Wiltshire Council was in the process of reorganising services and directorates, as well as managerial posts in a view to amalgamate management when possible. Wiltshire Council was leaner but striving to get even leaner.</p>	
10.	<p><u>Representatives on Outside Bodies</u></p> <p>Councillors Roy While and Jon Hubbard were not able to attend the meeting of the Area Board but the Chairman explained that they had both expressed an interest in maintaining their respective involvement with the Melksham Community Area Partnership and the Community Area Young Peoples Issues Group.</p> <p>The Board therefore confirmed the following appointments as representatives on Outside Bodies for 2010/11:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melksham Community Area Partnership: Councillor Roy While • Community Area Young Peoples Issues Group: Councillor Jon Hubbard 	
11.	<p><u>Future Meeting Dates</u></p> <p>The next meetings for the Melksham Area Board will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 8th September – Melksham Oak School. <p>The Chairman explained that the meeting would be specifically centred on Young People, with the portfolio holder for Children’s Services, Councillor Lionel Grundy, attending. He invited everyone to encourage young people to attend.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 13th October –Melksham Divisional Police HQ. <p>The Chairman welcomed the opportunity for the meeting to take place at the head quarters of one of Wiltshire Council’s Partners.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Evaluation & Close</u></p> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for coming along and contributing to the meeting and encouraged people to complete and return their feedback forms.</p>	