

Terms of Reference for the Melksham Community Area Partnership (MCAP)

MCAP is an independent and open forum for all those living, working or with a genuine interest in the sustainable development of their community.

Aim

The aim of the CAP is to promote the wellbeing of the community area with regards to its economic, social, environmental and cultural development.

Definition of the Community Area

MCAP is defined as the parishes of Atworth, Broughton Gifford, Bulkington, Great Hinton, Keevil, Melksham, Melksham Without, Poulshot, Seend, Semington and Steeple Ashton.

Objectives

- To be an open and inclusive organisation which seeks to actively engage with the community through a diverse programme of consultation and participation
- To consult throughout the community area in order to establish the collective needs and aspirations.
- To produce from consultation a community area plan, prioritising the needs and identifying routes for action.
- To communicate the work of the partnership widely within the community through promotional campaigns and active media engagement
- To keep the plan a living document and report widely and openly on its progress.
- To represent the community at the Area Board to ensure that Wiltshire Council are aware of the plan's proposals.
- To support, where necessary, the delivery of the plan's outcomes, by identifying appropriate bodies to further the process and by seeking external funding.
- To ensure that all decision-making is transparent, including making meeting notes and decisions available on websites for public scrutiny.

Membership, Structure, Meetings & Voting

Full Partnership

Everyone living, working or providing services, or with another genuine interest in the community area can consider themselves a member of MCAP and are entitled to undertake any level of involvement they choose. MCAP will hold a minimum of two Full Partnership meetings a year. One of these will be the AGM; held at MCAP's inauguration and yearly thereafter. Notification of the AGM must be given at least 21 days prior to the event. An EGM can be called if agreed upon by 25% of the steering group, also giving 21 days notice. Any member can vote at an AGM and EGM and can nominate themselves or another for Steering Group or Key Post at an election.

Steering Group

The Steering Group's function will be to coordinate the running of the Community Area Partnership; to ensure it carries out its objectives and operates in accordance to this constitution. The Steering Group is accountable to the Full Partnership of MCAP.

The Steering Group will consist of members of the Full Partnership, elected annually at the AGM and will have a minimum of eight members. Priority at the Election will be in gaining wide representation of the Community Area and so 11 places will be reserved for an individual/organisation from each of the parishes initially in order to ensure a balance of interest. The remainder will be open to election from any individuals or representatives from organisations or businesses in the area. If the 11 are not all taken up they will also go out to open election. During the first 12 months MCAP may make alterations to the steering group in order to best ensure wide representation of the community and the optimum structure will be ratified at the following AGM.

The Steering Group may wish to invite members of local services and organisations to join the Steering Group meeting when a specific issue arises to which they require outside expertise. Elected members of the Area Board are not permitted to hold officer positions or have voting rights but their attendance at meetings is welcomed. The intention is that decisions

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will be made, if possible, by consensus of the Steering Group, but in the need of a vote there must be 8 Steering Group members present to be quorate. The Chair will have a casting vote.

The Steering Group will hold a minimum of six meetings a year and will take opportunity of holding their meetings at a suitable time prior to their Area Board meeting in order to dovetail agendas and action.

Key Posts

The Steering Group will elect Key Posts, (Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer from within its members. These positions will be elected at the AGM, following the election of the new Steering Group. The members will hold their Post for one year and can then stand for re-election annually for up to a maximum three terms. The Chair's role is to coordinate meetings and to ensure the Steering Group is efficient and meets its, and the wider Partnership's, objectives. The Chair should also fulfill the role of representing MCAP on the Area Board, the WFCAP Steering Group and the Wiltshire Assembly. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, or another Steering Group member agreed upon, will substitute.

Working Groups

These may be in the form of themes which continually monitor certain areas of focus within the community, or they may be Task & Finish groups which arise to tackle a specific issue. These groups will be formed, coordinated and dissolved – when applicable – by the Steering Group. Working Groups will report back to the Steering Group on progress, they are accountable to them and to the wider Partnership of MCAP. Members of working groups can be anyone from within the Full Partnership or Steering Group.

Meetings of working groups will be subject to the nature and demands of each individual group. Working groups would have the authority to decide their own structure but at the initial meeting they will choose a member to act as representative and report back to the Steering Group when required. The intention is that decisions will be made, if possible, by consensus but if a vote is required all in attendance will vote and this action will be minuted and reported back to the Steering Group. The Steering Group may also look to other, already existing bodies or individuals to carry forward work on the MCAP's behalf, particularly when this will avoid duplication of effort.

Conduct

MCAP should ensure transparency at all times by communicating as widely and clearly as possible, publicising itself, its meetings and minutes and providing equal opportunities at all times. Meetings of all groups will be held within the community area at venues that are accessible to all and impartial. When deemed appropriate the meeting venues will rotate around the community area to get nearer to the issues and be accessible to all who may wish to engage with the steering group. Members of the Steering Group will look to represent the wider collective interests of the community, rather than single interest pressure groups. MCAP should recognise and value its members, acknowledging that many are volunteers and aim to always command the respect of the community. Conduct at all times should adhere to WFCAP's Minimum Operating Standards and the Wiltshire Compact. MCAP should aim to have a good working relationship with all other groups, organisations and individuals within the community area, as well as at county, and regional level.

Finance

MCAP will either hold a bank account or appoint an external Fundholder to retain their monies. Comprehensive accounts will be kept and will be made open and public. An annual independent inspection will be carried out. Any expenses will require authorisation by two of three appointed signatories from the Steering Group, one of which will not hold a Key Post. No cheques to be signed by the payee.

Alteration

Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually. Any alteration required in the interim may be made at an EGM with 21 days prior notice.

Dissolution

MCAP would need to hold an EGM, giving 21 days notice, at which it can dissolve. All unpaid debts must be cleared and then any remaining funds must be returned to the grant provider or, if applicable, transferred to the organisation succeeding MCAP.