

# MINUTES

**Meeting:** Melksham Area Board  
**Place:** Melksham Assembly Hall, Market Place, Melksham  
**Date:** 4 March 2020  
**Start Time:** 7.00 pm  
**Finish Time:** 9.20 pm

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Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

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## **In Attendance:**

### **Wiltshire Councillors**

Cllr Pat Aves, Cllr Hayley Illman, Cllr Jonathon Seed (Vice-Chairman),  
Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman) and Cllr Phil Alford

### **Wiltshire Council Officers**

Dominic Argar – Assistant Multimedia Officer, Peter Binley – Head of Highways Asset Management and Commissioning, Peter Dunford – Community Engagement Manager and Tara Shannon – Democratic Services Officer

### **Town and Parish Councillors**

Melksham Town Council  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
Bulkington Parish Council

### **Partners**

Wiltshire Police

**Total in attendance: 71**

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<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
104	<p data-bbox="336 376 1137 414"><u>Chairman's Welcome, Introduction and Announcements</u></p> <p data-bbox="336 443 1487 555">The Chairman introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. At the Chairman's invitation the members of the Area Board introduced themselves to the meeting.</p> <p data-bbox="336 591 1054 629">The Chairman gave the following announcements:</p> <ul data-bbox="384 665 1487 1559" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="384 665 1487 846">• <b>Melksham Community Campus update</b> The Chairman stated that a press release was available in agenda supplement 2. The project was moving forward, planning permission had been granted, a contractor had been appointed and the build should start later in the year.</li> <li data-bbox="384 853 1487 1070">• <b>Cleveland Bridge Bath – 18 tonne weight limit</b> The Chairman explained that the 18 tonne weight limit had been imposed by the Local Authority for safety reasons to allow the bridge to be repaired. The diversions in place meant that over 200 extra lorries over 18 tonnes were going through Melksham a day. However, the works were short term.</li> <li data-bbox="384 1077 1487 1182">• <b>Removal of D3 bus from Melksham to Bath by First</b> The Chairman referred the meeting to the announcement in agenda supplement 2.</li> <li data-bbox="384 1189 1487 1335">• <b>Closure of St Damian's Surgery</b> The Chairman had written to the CCG, however the surgery would still be closing on 31 March 2020. Cllr Pat Aves would be giving further details on this issue in her Health and Wellbeing update</li> <li data-bbox="384 1341 1487 1406">• <b>Families and Children Transformation (FACT) programme</b> The Chairman referred the meeting to the announcement in agenda pack.</li> <li data-bbox="384 1413 1487 1559">• <b>Great British Spring Clean</b> It was confirmed that Wiltshire Council would collect rubbish collected by volunteers. Parishes would need to contact Wiltshire Council to arrange a regular collection day.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="432 1594 1487 1666">For all the following announcements, the Chairman advised that there were details available in the agenda pack or supplements:</p> <ul data-bbox="384 1704 1251 1899" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="384 1704 1251 1742">• <b>Residents encouraged to manage Council Tax Online</b></li> <li data-bbox="384 1749 1098 1787">• <b>Changes to Kerbside Recycling Collections</b></li> <li data-bbox="384 1794 826 1832">• <b>Better Deal for Bus Users</b></li> <li data-bbox="384 1839 991 1877">• <b>Coronavirus Advice and Information</b></li> <li data-bbox="384 1883 927 1899">• <b>Community Governance Review</b></li> </ul>

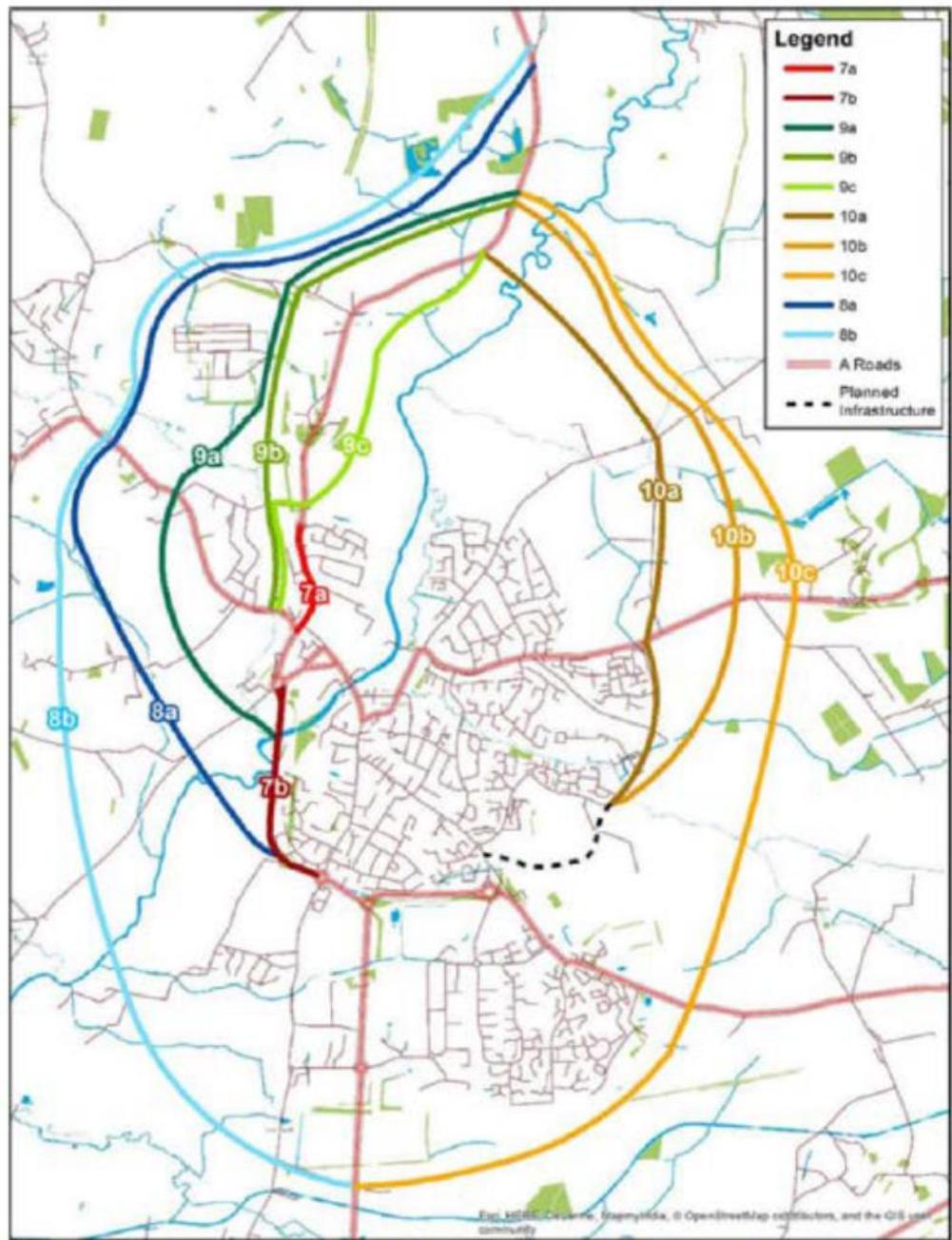
105	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>No apologies had been received from Wiltshire Councillors.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Kevin Fielding, the usual Democratic Services Officer for the meeting.</p>
106	<p><u>Minutes</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting were presented for consideration and it was;</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <p><b>To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6 January 2020 as a correct record.</b></p>
107	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Cllr Jon Hubbard declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6, the funding application from Cllr Alford for detached youth workers at the skate park, as he was Chair of Young Melksham. Even though the interest was non-pecuniary, in this instance he declared that he would not vote on that application.</p> <p>Cllr Jon Hubbard declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10, the grant application from the Wiltshire Youth Canoe Club, because he was a member of the management committee. As it was a non-pecuniary interest he declared that he would consider and vote on the application with an open mind.</p>
108	<p><u>A350 Melksham Bypass</u></p> <p>The Chairman introduced Peter Binley, Head of Highways Assets and Commissioning and advised that the A350 Melksham bypass scheme had only recently been announced, therefore there was only a limited amount of information available at the present time.</p> <p>Mr Binley stated that traffic had been growing on the A350 for many years and it needed upgrading as it was the primary north-south route between the M4 and the Dorset Coast. It also connected Wiltshire's principal settlements of Trowbridge and Chippenham via Melksham. It was a key strategic corridor in Wiltshire Core Strategy and SWLEP's Strategic Economic Plan and approximately 10,000 new homes were planned for the A350 corridor per decade. Sections of the A350 were subject to high traffic volumes, congestion and delays.</p> <p>Slides were shown to the meeting detailing economic growth zones, commuter journeys in Wiltshire and traffic flows. Traffic flow through Melksham was remarkably high. For much of this traffic, Melksham was not their destination. It</p>

did not take much for the system to become overloaded. The traffic flow was expected to keep increasing.

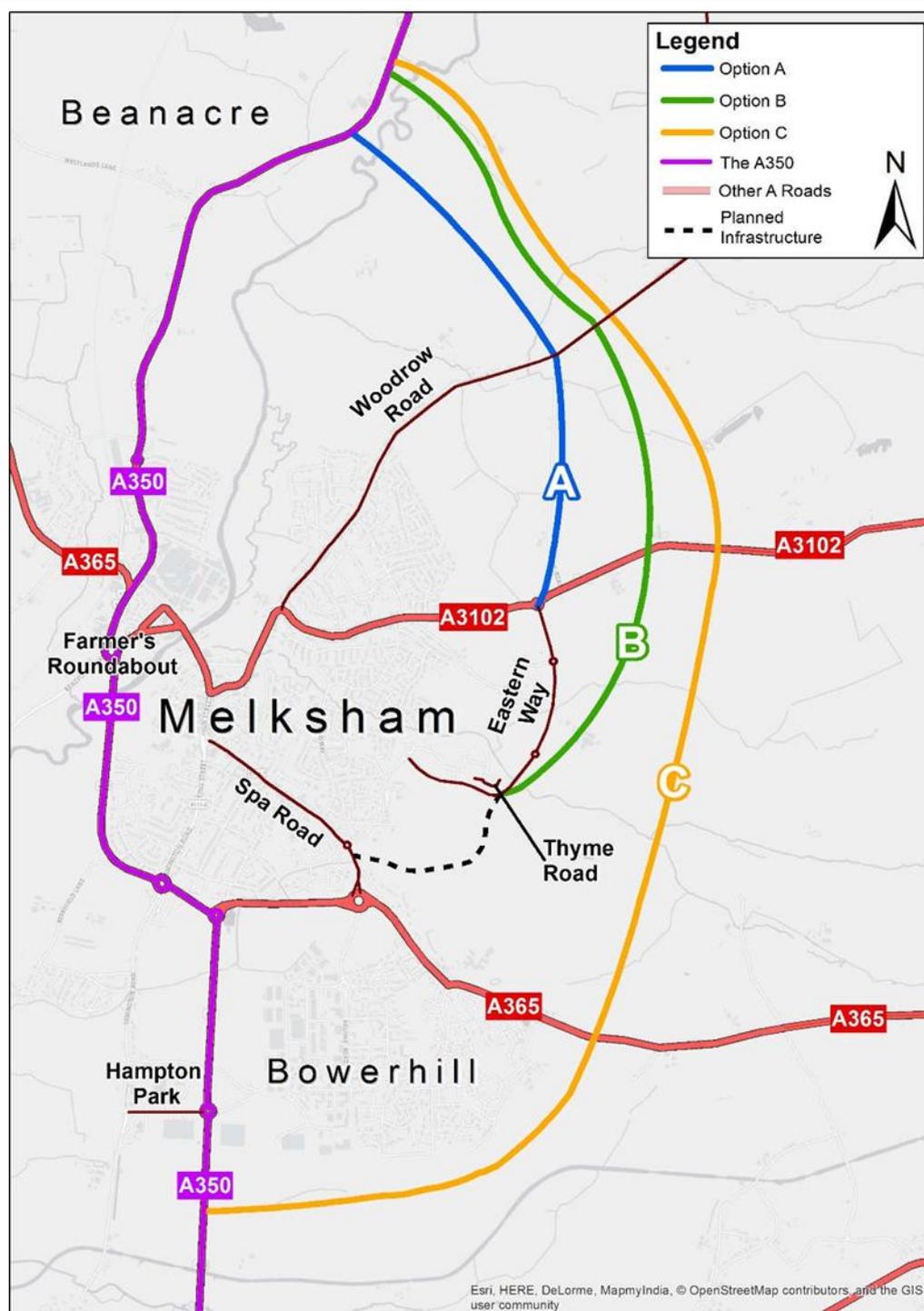
A Melksham bypass scheme had been considered several times in the past and studies were undertaken in 1991, 2001 and 2016. In 2016 a funding bid was unsuccessful. In 2019 another bid was made to the Department for Transport's Large Local Major Transport Schemes fund which was successful. The Government determined that there was a good business case to invest in the scheme and Wiltshire Council would receive £1.3 million from the Government to develop the scheme. The actual cost of developing and implementing the scheme could be up to £180 million.

There were several local constraints to any bypass route around Melksham, such as power lines, rail lines, rivers, flood zones, woodland and planned infrastructure. Other factors such as canal regeneration, archaeology, contamination and development opportunities would also be considered.

Many route options had been considered in the past. These were shown to the meeting and can be seen below.



The options to the East of Melksham were shown in more detail as shown below.



The routes were of different lengths. Obviously the shorter routes would be cheaper. However, it would be worth investing in a more expensive scheme if it was more effective. It was emphasised that at the present time no decision on a route had been made. Very complicated and detailed assessments would need to be completed using the latest data.

The next steps would include:

- Revisiting the options appraisal, including a review of route options and the do nothing option;
- Updating traffic and economic data;
- Developing and designing the scheme in more detail; developing proposals to enhance pedestrian / cyclist / bus facilities / green areas et cetera;
- Assessing environmental factors, constraints and mitigation measures;
- Undertaking public consultation;
- Finalising the scheme;
- Submitting a planning application and preparing the Outline Business Case.

It was stated that there was lots of work to do still to do but the Government grant would help them to achieve this which was a major step forward.

The possible timescales for the project (subject to successful progress through planning, statutory procedures and the continuing availability of funding) was to undertake public consultation in 2021 on the options and preferred routes. Then to submit a planning application in 2022 and to progress to the build in 2024/2025.

In response to questions it was stated that:

- It was not yet known if the A350 would be managed by Highways England rather than Wiltshire Council in the future. There would be pros and cons to such an arrangement. At the moment there was no sign that a change in management would occur.
- A member of the audience stated that the East route C went through countryside, it benefited Melksham but would be detrimental for Bowerhill and queried why the route was not put further out. In response it was stated that they will revisit and examine all the options, putting the route further out may be an option that would be examined. The constraints and proximity of properties would be considered. If the proposed route went close to properties, then screening options would be looked at.
- It was not definite that the route would not go over the canal. That would be expensive, but this did not necessarily preclude it. There would have to be a balancing act with cost/saving benefit analysis. All the details would be examined.
- All routes would be assessed including routes to the West of Melksham.
- Cost was an issue and the costs had to be balanced against the benefits, there was a finite limit. The more the cost of the scheme increased the less likely the Government would be to fund it. A better understanding of all the data was required.

The Chairman reiterated that the route was not firm, all details would be looked at and the sort of issues being raised would be taken into consideration.

	<p>Mr Binley confirmed that it was very early days, there were lots of possibilities. They needed to find the best route considering all the factors.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mr Binley for the presentation and for answering questions. He also requested that Mr Binley provide a brief update on the Town Bridge.</p> <p>Mr Binley explained that the part of the B3102 Bath Road which goes over the Town Bridge in Melksham would need to be closed in order to do repairs. The bridge had been built in the 1890's and was widened in the 1930's to add pavements. However, goods vehicles were now heavier and there was more traffic. The pavements on the bridge were weak and there was a risk that if a lorry mounted the pavement it could cause the bridge to collapse. Therefore, action had to be taken to make the bridge safe. Pedestrian barriers were to be installed on both sides of the bridge to stop vehicles being able to mount the pavements. The work was going well at the moment and was likely to end at the end of April. Mr Binley apologised for the delays and stated that it was better to do the works now rather than have an unplanned catastrophe.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mr Binley for explaining the situation.</p>
109	<p><u>King George V Masterplan and Melksham Skate Park mini-ramp</u></p> <p>Linda Roberts, Town Clerk of Melksham Town Council and James Threlfall MBE, skateboarder, gave a presentation about the investment by the Town Council in facilities at King George V Playing Fields and plans for an extension to the skate park.</p> <p>Linda Roberts explained that the Town Council was very committed to making the King George playing fields a central playing field for Melksham that everyone could enjoy and had set aside £500,000 for the project. A sensory garden was to be developed. Aspects of this would be carried out sequentially and volunteers would also be used. The fencing, footways and lights (electrical sources) were the first step. Play equipment in good order would be moved up to the splash pad and more equipment would be added. The toilets were to be improved and refurbished. The Town Council amenities team were moving to the park. At first, they would use the cricket pavilion and the maintenance shed would be improved or rebuilt. The amenities team now undertook all maintenance of the playing fields and took great pride in their work.</p> <p>James Threlfall explained that he had worked for about 6 years to get the new skate park built. He had used the old one and it had given him his career, so when he saw that it was no longer up to standard he wanted a new facility and worked to make that happen. He was very grateful for the funds received to build the park. The park had been very successful and as a result they wanted to install a new half pipe for beginners. Local businesses and organisations were helping to fund the new project which again he was very grateful for. A build scheme had been received from the contractors. The works would start in June</p>

	<p>and cost £25,000. The build would take approximately two weeks. Skateboarding was to be included in the next Olympics which should mean an uplift in young people using the facility.</p> <p>A question was received regarding vandalism and bullying issues at the skate park. It was hoped that measures would be put in place to deal with this.</p> <p>The Chairman interjected that he had received comments recently that the skate park was in really good condition and stated that the skaters themselves maintained the skate park as it was a really important facility to them. He referred the issue of safeguarding to Cllr Jon Hubbard who agreed that there were challenges. The dedicated skaters were not the problem, however others in the vicinity could be an issue. Young Melksham had received funding from UK Youth for £5,000 to run a “Bullies Not Welcome” project with 3 detached youth workers visiting the park on 2 evenings per week until the end of May 2020. The Area Board funding would help to continue this detached youth worker service at the skate park until the end of October 2020 and, should it prove effective, will hopefully lead to further funding in future years. James Threlfall agreed that youth workers at the skate park would be a good idea as Police resources did not allow for a regular PCSO presence in this location.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Linda Roberts and James Threlfall for their presentations and advised that the Cllr Initiatives detailed in the agenda would now be considered. As the first initiative was his proposal, he requested that Cllr Pat Aves temporarily take the Chair to introduce that initiative.</p> <p>The initiatives were considered and it was;</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To grant Councillor Seeds initiative £5,000 as requested towards a new mini-ramp at Melksham Skate Park.</b> <b>NOTE: It was noted that these funds would come from the next financial year’s budget (2020/2021) as the funds were not required until the next financial year.</b></li> <li>• <b>To grant Councillor Alford’s initiative £5,000 as requested from the youth budget, towards the costs of a detached youth worker service at the Skate Park.</b> <b>NOTE: It was noted that £4,000 of this funding would come from the youth budget for 2019/2020. The remaining £1,000 would come from the youth budget for the next financial year (2020/2021).</b></li> </ul>
110	<p><u>Public Open Spaces Network - operational details</u></p> <p>Councillor Phil Alford explained the details of a fund to support community groups with resources to improve their public open spaces through the provision of shared machinery and small grants to buy equipment and materials</p>

	<p>There were to be 2 funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Small Project Fund:</b> £ 6,000 available in 12 capital grants of £ 500 each for small projects - such as buying shovels, strimmers, goggles, gloves, hi-viz jackets, plants</li> <li>• <b>Machinery Fund:</b> £ 4,000 in larger capital grants available to buy and share larger kit needed for occasional use – such as a clipper or rotivator</li> </ul> <p>The bidding process would be through the existing online community grants process. A website was to be established with a calendar for booking use of the kit. The kits would be stored securely at accessible locations around the community, including at the Canberra Centre on Spa Road. Groups would be responsible for transportation of the kit to and from the storage in their own vehicles or with the support of their parish council. Groups would be responsible for their own public liability insurance cover and their own risk</p> <p>The £10,000 funding for the project had been agreed at the last Melksham Area Board meeting in January. Therefore, the proposal this time was simply to agree the split of the allocated funds between the two funds.</p> <p>The board considered the proposal and it was;</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To approve that the £10,000 allocated to the Public Open Spaces Network be split between two funds. £6,000 for the small project fund and £4,000 for the machinery fund.</b></li> </ul>
111	<p><u>Area Board sub groups</u></p> <p><b>Melksham Health and Wellbeing Group – Cllr Pat Aves</b></p> <p>The minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Group (HWBG) were published in agenda supplement 1, page 13.</p> <p>Cllr Pat Aves as Chair of the HWBG gave an update to the meeting. The HWBG was aiming to expand its remit from just dealing with grants to tackling local health issues.</p> <p>The group received an update from Dr Jonathon Osborn on the closure of St Damian’s Surgery. Dr Osborn reassured the HWBG that the other surgeries would be able to cope. The other surgeries had employed healthcare professionals such as mental health specialists, physiotherapists and pharmacists to complement their team of doctors. Patients did not always need to see a doctor and could instead see one of the healthcare professionals if that was more appropriate. It was stated that “over-capacity” had been built in to deal with the growth in population. Cllr Aves stated that she would keep an eye on the situation.</p>

	<p>Cllr Pat Aves introduced the Health and Wellbeing funding applications. A representative of Carer Support Wiltshire spoke in support of their application. The applications were considered by the board and it was;</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To refuse to grant the Independent Living Centre, £1,000 towards providing a benefits advice service for older and disabled people.</b></li> <li>• <b>To grant Carer Support Wiltshire, £965 towards creative writing workshops for carers.</b></li> </ul>
112	<p><u>Written Partner Updates</u></p> <p>There were no written reports from partners.</p> <p>During the Chairman's Announcements, Cllr Seed requested that Police Inspector Andy Fee give a verbal update to the meeting.</p> <p>Inspector Fee stated that Neighbourhood Policing Teams had been re-established which was good as the teams understood the concerns of the community.</p> <p>The Police were trying to increase engagement through social media and so far were getting a good response. The meeting was encouraged to follow Melksham Police on Facebook, <a href="https://en-gb.facebook.com/MelkshamPolice/">https://en-gb.facebook.com/MelkshamPolice/</a>.</p> <p>People were also encouraged to sign up to the Community Messaging system. This system allows people to receive alerts by email, text or voicemail from the Police, Fire Service, Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch, Horse Watch and Get Safe Online. After signing up to the service you could choose which organisations to receive messages from. Examples of messages that people may receive included community alerts, other policing news and events, details of area crime trends, appeals for information, consultations, crime prevention advice and outcomes of court cases relating to incidents in your area. Go to <a href="https://www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk/pages/2756/1/Home.html">https://www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk/pages/2756/1/Home.html</a> to sign up.</p> <p>In response to a question from the audience regarding the number of tractors and trailers parked on the Bowerhill Industrial Estate making it difficult to get through the estate, it was stated that Highways issues such as this were usually dealt with by the Local Authority. The Police could intervene if there was an access or safety issue. However, Police intervention would only be a short term solution, the Highways Department would need to look at a longer term solution.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that from Wiltshire Council's point of view one would need to see if the parking was illegal. If it was not they would need to make the case to change the traffic regulations to the Highways Department.</p>

	<p>The Chairman thanked Inspector Fee for his update.</p>
<p>113</p>	<p><u>Grant Funding</u></p> <p>Cllr Nick Holder left the meeting at 8.25pm.</p> <p>The Chairman explained that the board would not be able to fund all of the grant applications as there was not enough money left in the budget to cover them all, as it was the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Representatives of the organisations applying for grants spoke in support of their applications.</p> <p>Cllr Hubbard proposed that the Melksham Without Parish Council application was considered last. This was because the application was from a parish council who had the option to increase their precept to pay for the project. If there were funds left after the other grants had been considered, then the board could decide whether or not to fund the proposal. It was;</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <p><b>To consider the Melksham Without Parish Council application last.</b></p> <p>The grant applications as detailed in the agenda were presented for consideration and it was;</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To grant Poulshot Cricket Club, £2,000 towards a new mower</b></li> <li>• <b>To grant Transwilts CIC, £5,000 towards Melksham Station Community Hub Car Park and Café</b></li> <li>• <b>To grant Wiltshire Youth Canoe Club, £2,485 towards the Melksham Adventure Centre Floor Renewal</b></li> <li>• <b>To refuse to grant Strange Old Things - The Mobile Museum - £701 towards “A Short History of Change” touring exhibition of local schools.</b> <b>REASON: There were not enough funds left in the budget for all the applications.</b></li> <li>• <b>To refuse to grant Bulkington Parish Council requesting £1,618 towards a parish council storage facility.</b> <b>REASON: The application was from a parish council and the project was entirely for the parish council. Therefore, it was felt that the parish council should fund this by increasing their precept.</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To grant Community Emergency Group Shaw &amp; Whitley (CAWS), £745 towards a generator for use at the Whitley Reading Rooms</li> <li>• To grant Chippenham and District Sunday Football League, £1,960 towards grassroots football for young people NOTE: It was clarified that this application was for youth grant funding. Therefore, the funds awarded would come from the youth budget.</li> <li>• To grant Seend United Football Club, £678 towards Seend Lye Field floodlights</li> <li>• To grant Primrose Nature Area £4,000 of the £5,000 requested towards an accessible pathway project. NOTE: £2,760 of this would come from the Community Area Grant fund. As this was all the money left in the budget, the remaining £1,240 would come from the Public Open Space Fund.</li> <li>• To refuse to grant Melksham Town Council, £1,599 towards gazebos for Market Place events REASON: There was no funding left. The board requested that the applicants reapply for next years budget. Cllr Hayley Illman requested that if it was resubmitted it would be the first grant considered. The board agreed to this proposal.</li> <li>• To refuse to grant Melksham Without Parish Council, £5,000 towards Shurnhold Fields Car Park REASON: There were no funds left in the budget. It was stated that the applicants could reapply next year if they wished.</li> </ul>
114	<p><u>Youth Grant Funding</u></p> <p>Full details of the youth grant applications were contained in agenda supplement 1, page 17.</p> <p>Representatives of the organisations applying for funding spoke in support of their applications.</p> <p>The applications were considered and it was;</p> <p><b><u>Resolved:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To grant the 1st Bowerhill Scout Group, £1,900 of the £5,000 requested towards a new minibus REASON: £1,900 equated to half the remaining youth budget.</li> <li>• To grant Melksham Cricket Club £1,900 of the £2,500 requested</li> </ul>

	<p><b>towards new cricket nets</b>  <b>REASON: £1,900 equated to half the remaining youth budget.</b></p>
115	<p><u>Public questions</u></p> <p>A member of the audience stated that they were very disappointed that there was no one from Wiltshire Council to update people on the Campus. They had not yet been informed on a final decision regarding Melksham House. They were concerned and wanted answers to questions, therefore they requested that this be discussed at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that he would try to get answers and to get someone to attend the June meeting of the Area Board.</p> <p>There were no further questions.</p>
116	<p><u>Next Meetings</u></p> <p>The Chairman announced that the next meetings of the Melksham Area Board would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Melksham Our Community Matters Conference (JSNA) – Wednesday 8 April, Melksham Assembly Hall at 2pm- 4pm</li> <li>• Melksham Area Board – Wednesday 17 June, Seend Community Centre at 7pm.</li> </ul> <p>The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting.</p>
117	<p><u>Close</u></p>