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MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

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Monday 11th March 2024

To all members of the Council **Staffing Committee**: Councillors: Alan Baines (Chair of Committee), John Glover (Chair of Council), David Pafford (Vice-Chair of Council), Robert Shea-Simonds and Shona Holt

You are summoned to attend the Staffing Committee Meeting which will be held on **Monday 18th March 2024 at 7.00pm at Melksham Without Parish Council Offices (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES** to consider the agenda below.

TO ACCESS THE MEETING REMOTELY, PLEASE FOLLOW THE ZOOM LINK BELOW. THE LINK WILL ALSO BE POSTED ON THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE WHEN IT GOES LIVE SHORTLY BEFORE 7PM.

Click link here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2791815985?pwd=Y2x5T25DRIVWVU54UW1YWWE4NkNrZz09>

Or go to www.zoom.us or Phone 0131 4601196 and enter: **Meeting ID: 279 181 5985**
Passcode: 070920. Instructions on how to access Zoom are on the parish council website www.melkshamwithout.co.uk. If you have difficulties accessing the meeting please call (do not text) the out of hours mobile: 07341 474234

To access the agenda online please scan the below QR code.

YOU CAN ACCESS THE AGENDA PAPERS HERE

Yours sincerely

Teresa Strange, Clerk



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AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Announcements and Housekeeping**
2. **To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given**
3. To receive **Declarations of Interest**
4. **To consider holding items in Closed Session to confidential nature** Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business **(Agenda items 9 & 10)** as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted
5. **Public Participation**
6. **Health and Safety:** To note any Health and Safety matters occurring since the last meeting (standing item as per the health and safety policy).
7. **Policies:** To review the following policies:
 - i. Social Media Policy
 - ii. Safeguarding Policy
8. **Staff Training:**
 - i. To note current staff training log
 - ii. To consider options for staff fire warden training
9. To approve Clerk's temporary working arrangements
10. To receive feedback following staff appraisal and consider any actions arising

Copy to: All Councillors



MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

**To be reviewed by Staffing Committee 18th March
2024**

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 This policy is intended to help employees including clerks, RFO's, Executive Officers, part-time, fixed-term and casual employees (collectively referred to as employees in this policy), volunteers and members make appropriate decisions about the use of social media such as blogs, social networking websites, forums, message boards, or comments on web-articles, such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the standards we require employees and volunteers to observe when using social media, the circumstances in which we will monitor your use of social media and the action we will take in respect of breaches of this policy.

2. The scope of the policy

- 2.1. All employees, volunteers and members are expected to comply with this policy at all times to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of our council.
- 2.2. Breach of this policy by employees may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedures and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.

3. Responsibility for implementation of the policy

- 3.1 The council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.
- 3.2 The clerk is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for changes to minimise risks to our work.
- 3.3 All employees, volunteers and members should ensure that they take the

time to read and understand it. Any breach of this policy should be reported to the Clerk, (or in the case of the breach by the Clerk, to the Chairman of the Council).

- 3.4** Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Clerk.

4 Using social media sites in our name

- 4.1** Only the Clerk or staff as directed by the Clerk are to post material on a social media website in the council's name and on our behalf.

5 Using social media

- 5.1** We recognise the importance of the internet in shaping public thinking about our council and community. We also recognise the importance of our employees, volunteers and members joining in and helping shape local government conversation and direction through interaction in social media.

- 5.2** Before using social media on any matter which might affect the interests of the council you must:

- a) have read and understood this policy
- b) employees and volunteers must have sought and gained prior written approval to do so from the Clerk

6 Rules for use of social media

Whenever you are permitted to use social media in accordance with this policy, you must adhere to the following general rules:

- 6.1** Do not upload, post or forward a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content.
- 6.2** Any employee, volunteer or member who feels that they have been harassed or bullied, or are offended by material posted or uploaded by a colleague onto a social media website should inform the Clerk, or Chairman of the Council as appropriate.
- 6.3** Never disclose commercially sensitive, personal private or confidential information. If you are unsure whether the information you wish to share falls within one of these categories, you should discuss this with the Clerk.
- 6.4** Do not upload, post or forward any content belonging to a third party unless you have that third party's consent.
- 6.5** Before you include a link to a third-party website, check that any terms and conditions of that website permit you to link to it.

- 6.6 When making use of any social media platform, you must read and comply with its terms of use.
- 6.7 Be honest and open, but be mindful of the impact your contribution might make to people's perceptions of the council.
- 6.8 You are personally responsible for content you publish into social media tools.
- 6.9 Don't escalate heated discussions, try to be conciliatory, respectful and quote facts to lower the temperature and correct misrepresentations.
- 6.10 Don't discuss employees without their prior approval.
- 6.11 Always consider others' privacy and avoid discussing topics that may be inflammatory e.g. politics and religion.
- 6.12 Avoid publishing your contact details where they can be accessed and used widely by people you did not intend to see them, and never publish anyone else's contact details.

7 Monitoring use of social media websites

- 7.1 Employees should be aware that any use of social media websites (whether or not accessed for council purposes) may be monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken against employees under our Disciplinary Procedures.
- 7.2 Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give rise to legal liability against you and us.
- 7.3 In particular a serious case of uploading, posting forwarding or posting a link to any of the following types of material on a social media website, whether in a professional or personal capacity, will probably amount to gross misconduct (this list is not exhaustive):
 - a) pornographic material (that is, writing, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature);
 - b) a false and defamatory statement about any person or organisation;
 - c) material which is offensive, obscene
 - d) criminal, discriminatory, derogatory or may cause embarrassment to the council, members, or our employees;
 - e) confidential information about the council or anyone else
 - f) any other statement which is likely to create any liability (whether criminal or civil, and whether for you or the council); or
 - g) material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights, or which invades the privacy of any person.

Any such action will be addressed under the Council's Disciplinary Procedures/Code of Conduct and for employees may result in summary dismissal.

7.4 Where evidence of misuse is found we may undertake a more detailed investigation in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedures, involving the examination and disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation and any witnesses or managers involved in the investigation. If necessary such information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

7.5 If you notice any use of social media by other employees or volunteers in breach of this policy please report it to the Clerk.

8 Monitoring and review of this policy

8.1 The Staffing & Resources Committee shall be responsible for reviewing this policy annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

Adopted by Melksham Without Parish Council Min. 091/16 at Staffing & Resources Committee held 27th June 2016, approved by Full Council meeting Min 111/16 25th July 2016.

Based on SLCC Template April 2016.

Recommended for Re-adoption by the Staffing Committee on 16 March 2020 (Min 489c/19)

Adopted at the Annual Council Meeting 22 May 2023 (Min 10(C))



MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

Safeguarding Policy

**To be reviewed at the Staffing Committee 18th
March 2024**

1. Introduction and Purpose:

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to outline the commitment and responsibilities of Melksham Without Parish Council in ensuring the welfare and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults who engage with or are involved in the activities, programmes, and services provided by the parish council. This policy aims to create a safe and supportive environment for all individuals, preventing any form of harm or abuse.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all members, employees, volunteers, and individuals engaged in activities, events, and services organised or supported by the Parish Council.

3. Legal Framework:

Melksham Without Parish Council is committed to complying with all relevant legislation and guidance pertaining to safeguarding, including but not limited to:

- a. Children Act 1989 and 2004
- b. Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- c. Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- d. Data Protection Act 2018
- e. Equality Act 2010

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

4.1 Parish Council:

- a) Melksham Without Parish Council will appoint a designated safeguarding officer who will be responsible for overseeing the implementation and compliance of this policy.

- b) The council will provide the necessary resources, training, and support to promote safeguarding within the parish council and its activities.
- c) The Council will promptly respond to any concerns, allegations, or incidents related to safeguarding and follow the appropriate reporting procedures.

4.2 **Safeguarding Officer:**

- a) The designated Safeguarding Officer will be the primary point of contact for all safeguarding matters and provide advice, guidance, and support to individuals within the parish council. The Clerk is the designated Safeguarding Officer for Melksham Without Parish Council.
- b) The Clerk will stay updated on relevant legislation, guidance, and best practices in safeguarding and ensure their implementation within the council.
- c) The Clerk will receive concerns, allegations, or incidents related to safeguarding, maintain accurate records, and follow the council's reporting and escalation procedures.

4.3 **Members, Employees, and Volunteers:**

- a) All members, employees, and volunteers engaging in activities or events involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults shall undergo appropriate recruitment processes, including obtaining relevant references and clearances.
- b) Individuals will receive safeguarding training and guidance, ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities and how to respond to concerns or disclosures appropriately.
- c) Individuals shall report any safeguarding concerns, allegations, or incidents to the designated safeguarding officer or follow the established reporting channels.

5. **Code of Conduct:**

- a) All members, employees, and volunteers must adhere to the Parish Council's Code of Conduct, which emphasises the respectful and safe treatment of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- b) Individuals must maintain appropriate boundaries and avoid engaging in behaviour that may be deemed abusive, exploitative, or discriminatory.
- c) Individuals shall report any suspicions, concerns, or disclosures promptly and in accordance with the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

6. Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

- a) All safeguarding concerns, allegations, or incidents will be handled in a confidential manner, with information shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.
- b) Melksham Without Parish Council will comply with relevant data protection legislation when handling personal information related to safeguarding matters.

7. Reporting Procedures:

- a) Any safeguarding concerns, allegations, or incidents should be reported immediately to the Clerk who is the designated safeguarding officer or the appropriate authority, as defined in the reporting guidelines.
- b) Individuals reporting concerns shall provide accurate and detailed information, maintaining confidentiality to the extent possible.

8. Review and Monitoring:

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its continued effectiveness and compliance with any changes in legislation or best practices. Melksham Without Parish Council will monitor the implementation of the policy and take appropriate measures to address any shortcomings or areas for improvement.

This safeguarding policy will be made available to all members, employees, volunteers, and stakeholders of Melksham Without Parish Council. It will be regularly communicated, reviewed, and reinforced to ensure the ongoing commitment to safeguarding within the parish council and its activities.

Recommended at Staffing committee 26th June 2023 (min. 095g/23) and approved for adoption by Full Council 24th July 2023.

MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

Training Record- Since last reviewed at Staffing Committee 30th October 2023

Date	Training	Provider of the course	Who undertook course
31/10/2023	Cyber Security Awareness summitt webinar		Lorraine McRandle Marianne Rossi
16/11/2023	Martyn's Law: where are we now		Marianne Rossi
21/11/2023	Allotment Management: Tenancy Agreements and Policies		Marianne Rossi
16/01/2024	Creating a Strategic Vision for Shaping the Future		Teresa Strange
17/01/2024	Managing Anxiety		Teresa Strange Lorraine McRandle Marianne Rossi
23/02/2024	Agendas, Summons & Minutes Scribe training	Scribe	Lorraine McRandle Marianne Rossi
19/02/2024	Spreadsheet Training Session 1	Skills Ladder Ltd	Teresa Strange Marianne Rossi
26/02/2024	Spreadsheet Training Session 2	Skills Ladder Ltd	Teresa Strange Marianne Rossi
04/03/2024	Spreadsheet Training Session 3	Skills Ladder Ltd	Marianne Rossi

Fire Warden Training:

Lorraine and Teresa both undertook fire warden training in June 2021. While there is no expiry date on the certificate, we wanted to draw to your attention that this was now coming up to three years if you wished for them to have a refresher. There are two options which are detailed below:

In person training £80 + VAT:

<https://www.whatnosafety.co.uk/training/fire-warden-training-course>

Online training £24.95 + VAT (Please note this isn't a live session where you can ask questions etc, it's something that can be undertaken at your own pace): https://www.protrainings.uk/courses/442-fire-warden-and-fire-marshall?search_term=fire



MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

HOME AND HYBRID WORKING POLICY

About This Policy

Melksham Without Parish Council support homeworking in appropriate circumstances, either occasionally (to respond to specific circumstances or to complete particular tasks) or in some cases on a regular (full or part-time) basis. In addition, occasional or permanent homeworking can, in certain circumstances, be a means of accommodating a disability and can be requested as a means of flexible working.

This policy sets out how we will deal with requests for homeworking, and conditions on which homeworking will be allowed or in some circumstances required. If you are allowed or required to work from home, you must comply with this policy.

This policy does not form part of any employee's Contract of Employment and we may amend it at any time.

Hybrid Working Arrangements

As part of our commitment to flexible working, we support hybrid working arrangements.

A hybrid working arrangement is a flexible working arrangement which allows you to split your working time between the workplace and an agreed remote working location, such as your home.

Hybrid working arrangements will differ depending on the nature of your role, duties and responsibilities and so are discretionary and subject to agreement with the Clerk.

The days and times worked from your workplace and your agreed remote working location are subject to agreement with the Clerk and may vary to accommodate the needs of the council.

Whether hybrid working arrangements can be accommodated will be subject to the same considerations and conditions as set out in this Policy.

Temporary or Occasional Home or Hybrid Working Arrangements

There are a number of circumstances in which the ability to work from home on an occasional or temporary basis may be of benefit to you and us:

- When a child or elderly relative becomes unwell or arrangements for their care break down at short notice;
- When, despite being fit to work, travelling to the office is difficult (for example, due to recovery from an injury such as a broken leg);
- When public transport has been disrupted (for example, by the weather or by a strike that affects your travel arrangements);
- When a quiet, uninterrupted work environment will assist in dealing with a backlog of administrative tasks or in writing reports/preparing for meetings to a deadline; or
- During any period when you are unable to work from the office such as during severe weather or a global pandemic.

In these circumstances, working at home can be authorised by the Clerk where, in their opinion:

- You have work that can be undertaken at home;
- You have the required equipment to work from home; and
- Working at home is cost-effective and any increase in work that may be passed to your colleagues as a result is kept to a minimum.

The Clerk will, where necessary, liaise with the council to confirm arrangements.

In the event that you are suffering from mild illness but are well enough to work, we may require you to work from home during your illness if you are suffering from symptoms associated with a contagious disease. This is in order to protect the health and safety of your colleagues and to prevent the spread of infections within the workplace.

In addition, if circumstances affect our ability to allow you to come into the workplace because of, for example, government restrictions and/or health and safety requirements, we may require you to work from home.

Permanent Home or Hybrid Working Arrangements

After successful completion of your probationary period, you can make an application for home or hybrid working, which will be considered on its merits. However, not all roles and not all jobs are suitable for such arrangements.

You may want to vary your working arrangements so that you may work from home permanently or for a fixed period, or you may wish to work from home for all or part

of your working week for example, by way of a hybrid working arrangement. Any request to work from home or remotely must meet the needs of the council as well as your needs.

A request for home or hybrid working is unlikely to be approved if:

- You need to be present in the office to perform your job (for example, because it involves a high degree of personal interaction with colleagues or third parties or involves equipment that is only available in the office);
- Your most recent appraisal identifies any aspect of your performance as unsatisfactory;
- Your line manager has advised you that your current standard of work or work production is unsatisfactory;
- You have an unexpired warning, whether relating to conduct or performance; or
- You need supervision to deliver an acceptable quality and/or quantity of work.

If you wish to apply to work from home, you will need to be able to show that you can:

- Work independently, motivate yourself and use your own initiative;
- Manage your workload effectively and complete work to set deadlines;
- Identify and resolve any new pressures created by working at home; and
- Adapt to new working practices, including maintaining contact with the Clerk and colleagues at work.

To be considered for permanent home or hybrid working, you must submit a written application to the Clerk. Requests from the Clerk to be addressed to the Chair of Council and the Chair of Staffing Committee in the first instance. Applications will be reviewed by the Staffing Committee who will make their recommendation to the Full Council. Your application must state:

- Why you consider your job to be suitable for home or hybrid working and how you meet the criteria for home or hybrid working set out above;
- The date from which you wish the arrangements to start and, if you wish to work from home for a fixed period, the date on which you want the arrangements to finish. You should try to give us as much notice as possible and, in any event, make your application at least 4 weeks before your proposed start date so that your request can be considered;
- Whether you wish to work from home for all or part of your working week and, if only part, which days you propose to work from home;
- How you would organise your work from home, including how you would ensure the security of documents and information, where appropriate;
- If you are wishing to work from another remote location other than your home, providing details for that, including where, when, and how it would work;
- The extent to which you could be available to come into the workplace on days you are proposing to work from home if needed, for example to cover if

colleagues are off sick, to cope with high or unexpected levels of work or to attend meetings or training days and to staff the public office;

- If different from your current hours of work, the hours of work that you propose apply when you are working at home; and
- How you envisage maintaining contact with your line manager, how your work will be set, and how progress will be monitored.

If you wish to work from a remote working location abroad at any time during any hybrid working arrangement, this will require separate approval from the council and there is no guarantee that this will be possible. Working remotely from a location abroad is not subject to this policy due to different compliance and legislative requirements.

It may assist your application for home or hybrid working if you first discuss your proposal with the Clerk informally. This may identify potential problems with your application, such as a need to be in the workplace on occasions you had not considered, which your application can then address.

In considering your application, the Clerk may invite you to a meeting to discuss your proposals. If your request is refused, we will give you written reasons explaining why and you have the opportunity to appeal.

If your application is accepted, the agreed arrangements will be recorded in writing and may be subject to a trial period.

Conditions and Rules Relating to Home and Hybrid Working

Any terms on which it is agreed that you may work from home/ remotely either on a temporary or permanent basis will include the following:

- We reserve the right to terminate any informal home/hybrid working arrangements, for example if your role changes such that home/hybrid working is no longer suitable, subject to reasonable notice.
- You will be subject to the same performance measures, processes and objectives that would apply if you worked at our premises.
- If you receive an unsatisfactory grade in an appraisal or are subject to a written warning for any reason, your home/hybrid working arrangements may be terminated immediately, and you will be expected to return to work at our premises.
- The Clerk will remain responsible for supervising you and will regularly review your home/hybrid working arrangements and take steps to address any perceived problems. They will ensure that you are kept up to date with circulars and information relevant to your work.
- You agree to attend the office or other reasonable location for meetings, training courses or other events which we expect you to attend.
- Working at or from home/ remotely may affect your home and contents insurance policy, mortgage, lease or rental agreement. You must make any

necessary arrangements with your insurers, bank, mortgage provider or landlord before commencing homeworking.

Requests to Return to Work in the Office

If you want to terminate your home/hybrid working arrangement, you must notify the Clerk in the first instance. We will only be able to accommodate your request if there is sufficient office space and a suitable desk for you.

Working at Home/ Remotely: Equipment

We will provide any equipment that we consider you reasonably require to work from home/ remotely, which will remain our property. We will make all necessary arrangements for, and bear the cost of, installing and removing equipment from your home. Where equipment is provided, you must:

- Use it only for the purposes for which we have provided it;
- Take reasonable care of it and use it only in accordance with any operating instructions and our policies and procedures; and
- Make it available for collection by us, or on our behalf, when requested to do so.

We are not responsible for associated costs of you working from home / remotely including the costs of heating, lighting or electricity.

Working at Home/ Remotely: Data Security and Confidentiality

All equipment and information must be kept securely. You should take all necessary steps to ensure that private and confidential material is kept secure at all times. The Clerk must be satisfied that all reasonable precautions are being taken to maintain confidentiality of material in accordance with our requirements.

You may only use equipment which has been provided by or authorised by us. You agree to comply with our instructions relating to software security and to implement all updates to equipment as soon as you are requested to do so.

You confirm that you have read and understood our policies relating to computer use, electronic communications and data security and that you will regularly keep yourself informed of the most current version of these policies.

If you discover or suspect that there has been an incident involving the security of information relating to the council, or anyone working with or for the council, you must report it immediately to the Clerk.

Working at Home / Remotely: Health and Safety

When working at home or from another remote location, you have the same health and safety duties as other staff. You must take reasonable care of your own health

and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by your actions and omissions. You must attend/complete the usual office health and safety courses and undertake to use equipment safely.

We retain the right to check working areas for health and safety purposes. The need for such inspections will depend on the circumstances, including the nature of the work undertaken.

You must not have meetings in your home with members of the public and must not give the public your home address or telephone number.

You must ensure that your working patterns and levels of work both over time and during shorter periods are not detrimental to your health and wellbeing.

If you are a home/remote worker, the council will normally expect you to contact the Clerk regularly.

Home/remote workers must ensure that they take adequate rest breaks as required by the Working Time Regulations 1998. You must:

- Take a break during each working day of at least 20 minutes, during which you must stop work;
- Ensure that you have a daily rest break of at least 11 continuous hours, i.e., the time period between stopping work one day and beginning work the next day must not be less than 11 hours; and
- Have at least one complete day each week when no work is done.

You must use your knowledge, experience and training to identify and report any health and safety concerns to the Clerk.

Recommended by Staffing & Resources Committee on Monday 4th October 2021. Approved by Full Council 18th October 2021.