

MINUTES of a Meeting of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 24th January 2011 at Crown Chambers, 7 Market Place, Melksham at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Cllr. Mike Mills (Chairman); Cllrs. Alan Baines; Rolf Brindle; Paul Clark; Gregory Coombes; John Glover; Maurice Hubert; Don Millard; Pat Nicol; Steve Petty; Mike Sankey and Richard Wood.

22 residents from Snarlton Lane also attended to protest about PA MT 04033 for 85 new dwellings, garages and associated engineering works on land east of Snowberry Lane and south of Sandridge Road (adjacent to Snarlton Lane). Resident Mr Wingfield from Whitley also attended the Meeting.

Apologies: Cllr. Elizabeth Bean

425/10 **Welcome to New Council Member:** The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Maurice Hubert to his first Meeting as the new Councillor for the Shaw and Whitley Ward.

426/10 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Steve Petty declared an interest in all items on the Agenda relating to the Area Board as a Member of the Board and in Berryfield Hall as a member of the Hall Committee. He also declared an interest in all items relating to planning as a member of the Central Hub Planning Committee. He informed that he had not yet received papers relating to the Budget and Precept for 2011/12 and thus would be abstaining from participation in discussion and voting relating to Item 6. It was noted these papers had been sent to all members before Christmas. Cllr. Wood also declared an interest in Berryfield Hall as a member of the Hall Committee. The Clerk and Assistant Finance Officer, Teresa Strange declared an interest in items relating to their salaries in the Budget papers, as detailed in the Finance Committee Minutes of 8th and 22nd November. Cllr. Wood declared an interest in items relating to Berryfield Hall as a member of the Hall Committee. Cllr. Glover declared an interest in Item 13: the possible registration of the land behind Wellington Drive as a new Village Green, as a resident of Wellington Drive, when this item was discussed.

The Council resolved to suspend Standing Orders to enable a period for public participation

427/10 **Public Participation (1)**

New development adjacent to Snarlton Lane:

Resident Brian Sweet of 367B, Snarlton Lane informed that Snarlton Lane was saturated and developers were using 2 industrial pumps to remove excess water. The Lane suffered badly from flooding because there was no highway drainage or footways. The South West was the wettest area in the country. The existing flooding problem had been exacerbated by the 126 units of affordable housing built by Selwood Housing at the top of the Lane. More concrete inevitably meant more water and greater flooding. Parts of the storm water and foul sewerage drainage installed by developers were already over capacity and he feared soon homes would be flooded in the Lane. When flooding had occurred a few months earlier, the developers had been urged to discuss the problems of surface water drainage with the Environment Agency and Wessex Water. Had this happened yet? The new Government had warned about forthcoming extreme weather conditions and in many areas planners were now reviewing drainage and flood defence systems.

The Chairman informed Wessex Water was responsible for flooding in homes.

Mr Sweet informed that Wessex Water was aware of the inadequacy of the Lane due to lack of highway drainage. Wessex Water was not a statutory consultee like the Environment Agency (EA) and relied on receiving information from others. The seriousness of the flooding issue was sufficient in itself to warrant refusing this

development. Wimpey had submitted the present plans. He had seen a 3 page letter of objection to the earlier Selwood Housing which demonstrated double standards because objections were based on houses being too close to residents and the site being overdeveloped, leading to a loss of residential amenity. The development had been termed “unacceptably oppressive” The whole area including Selwood needed to be considered as one development because it already had its 30% of affordable housing; some of which had not been sold. The new proposed three-storey building would dwarf the Selwood flats. Now houses were proposed next to the Lane, in very close proximity to Snarlton Lane homes . They were extremely dense as to be claustrophobic and incestuous. Please would reason prevail. There was no evidence to warrant such a high density. Previous developments in Melksham remained unoccupied.

Ms Carolyn Cooper paced out 18 foot across the Council Chamber and emphasised the new homes would be closer to Snarlton Lane houses than the width of the room. They would destroy what was left of the Lane and its heritage. The thick hedgerow along Snarlton Lane was protected. She expressed apology for repeating strong language heard from a resident of the new Selwood housing who told a neighbour she was putting bleach on the hedge to kill it. When Wiltshire Council had seen photos showing how close new houses were to Snarlton Lane they had been appalled. Should 85 houses be put next to a rural lane, in front of just 10 houses? At the bottom end of Snarlton Lane things were even worse. She was fortunate to be able to move but others could not. Due to flooding, the site outside her house had been filled already. Manoli Crook reported that a group of residents had visited MP Duncan Hames about these issues. He had informed that the new Government was not so strict about this, and it was up to local councils to condense housing numbers. Local councils could not hide behind the Government. The proposed proximity of houses would strangle the Lane completely.

Malcolm Cooper (365) informed that one house at the top of the Lane had been flooded because a ditch had been filled in. The new development at Vines Court itself took the full capacity of the existing ditch.

Mr Morland (359) reported that he owned a cottage in Snarlton Lane and the measurement to the top apex was 6 metres. Any 3 storey building nearby would dwarf his property.

Mr Bourck emphasised houses were being built with insufficient parking. Eventually this would lead to someone cutting a hole in the hedge and then parking and blocking the Lane

The Chairman informed current planning requirements was for 1.8 parking spaces per property. He agreed that some houses had 3- 4 cars.

Ms Morgan (359) emphasised that Snarlton Lane was the oldest road in Melksham. The hedge was protected but opposite their property a section was missing. It was not maintained because it fell within the site boundary. Residents needed assurance that the hedge would be properly maintained. At present brambles went out into the road. Who was going to take responsibility for it?

There was discussion about who should carry out maintenance. Cllr. Baines informed the hedge was on the development site.

Cllr. Millard emphasised he had lived at the top of Snarlton Lane for many years and the hedge formerly belonged to the farmer and so was part of the site. An old ditch had been filled in. Years ago water used to run down Snarlton Lane toward a 5 bar gate in Sandridge Road. There was now more surface water as a result of building upon clay. The developer should have to hear responsibility for reinstating the ditch along Snarlton Lane. He was against more development in the Lane. Businesses were suffering because of extra traffic.

Ms Ann Sibley (323A) reported that the hedge backed on to her garden. If it was removed or damaged this took away her boundary. An old neighbour who had lived

in Snarlton Lane had informed her there used to be a pond adjacent to Snarlton Lane which overflowed as to make the Lane impassable.

Mr Brian Sweet asked if planting and protecting the hedgerow could be made a condition of planning consent.

Ms Manoli Crook asked that the hedgerow should be reinforced with some new planting, to cut down noise and light into the Lane.

Carolyn Cooper emphasised peoples' lives and the Snarlton community was being devastated by this development. She had had to attend 2 meetings at the Town Council and the Parish Council re planning issues that evening; both held at the same time.

Cllr. Glover advised residents to make their points individually to Wiltshire Council in letters and to ask their local Wiltshire Councillor Mark Griffiths to call the application in. When it was noted that Cllr. Griffiths was off sick, Wiltshire Cllr. Roy While offered to call it in, on Mark Griffith's behalf.

The Clerk advised residents to send letters to the Planning Case Officer Mike Kilmister at the Bradley Road Trowbridge address. It was important to put the correct description of the planning application and the planning number in the letter. The Chairman emphasised each resident needed to write separately and put individual points. When residents spoke to the Planning Committee, it was important not to repeat the same points. He also advised residents to take the matter to the next Area Board meeting on 2nd February.

The Council re-convened.

The Council resolved to advance Item 5 (i) PA 10 04033 on the Agenda so that residents would know the Council's comments immediately.

428/10

PA 10 04033 Taylor Wimpey (Bristol); Residential Development including housing, garages and associated engineering works :

It was noted that although the development site was within Melksham Town boundary, the planning application had been sent to Melksham Without.

***Comments:** Melksham Without Parish Council OBJECTS to this development for the following reasons:*

- 1. To date, there is insufficient provision for surface water drainage. Since this is a flooding area, it should be addressed in a full Flood Alleviation Strategy for the site.*
- 2. The recent serious flooding problems in and around Snarlton Lane, resulting from lack of adequate drainage measures for the large new Persimmon Homes development should be alleviated before any further development takes place in this area. We understand that there has been reticence on the part of Wimpey to share costs of the required infrastructure. As this development adjoins the 640 unit development and counts as part of the overall 750 houses allocated for the site, no development should be permitted unless a comparable amount of funding is given to ensure adequate surface water drainage for the area overall.*
- 3. Snarlton Lane itself requires full highway drainage and re-instatement of the old ditch to take surface water away before any of these houses are built. Since a flooding problem already exists this must be addressed before any further building work causes more surface water retention both on the site, across A3102 and in Snarlton Lane.*

4. *The housing density for this site is far too high. Since it is closer to the countryside than Snarlton Lane, the proposed density should equal or be less than the density of housing in Snarlton Lane. Housing density for this site should reflect and be in keeping with the density of housing in the Lane. It is ridiculous to try to site 85 dwellings in front of 10 dwellings.*
5. *Apart from density, the style and height of housing needs to be in keeping with existing houses in Snarlton Lane. Some are extremely old and attractive cottages and their charm should not be allowed to be dwarfed from inappropriate urban-style houses. This is an “edge of town/country” development.*
6. *The development plans lack any proper maintenance plan for the hedge itself. The attractive hedgerow has always been significant of Snarlton Lane which historically is an old drovers’ road; one of the oldest roads in the Melksham area. The hedge requires significant re-planting and protection with a post and rail fence to prevent it being further eroded. It has thinned already due to neglect and it needs to be thickened up to act as a buffer to noise and light. A maintenance plan, professional planting and remedial works are required immediately before any construction work takes place.*
7. *Housing adjacent to the hedgerow should be no closer to the hedgerow than the back housing line of plots 64 and 65. See attached map.*
8. *Care should be taken to ensure that there is down glare lighting and sufficient green buffer to keep noise and light pollution to a minimum.*

In summary, my Council is not impressed with this urban-style plan and looks forward to seeing revised plans for a development which takes account of adjacent surroundings and which will not cause loss of quality of life and amenity to existing residents in Snarlton Lane.

429/10 **Flooding from new development into A3102 Sandridge Road:** The Chairman read out an email received from the Area Board Chairman Jonathon Seed, in answer to representations made by the Clerk for the flooding issue to be raised at an Operational Flood Working Group on 19th January in Devizes. This made clear that Cllr. Seed had raised this issue and problems had occurred due to developers putting in drainage pipes that were not large enough. The developer was operating a 24/7 pump to take away surface water and the development would not be signed off until the matter had been resolved. Cllr. Baines reported that he had raised the issue with Danny Everett. Hard standing had to be installed in order to enable trenches to be built. **Resolved:** *The Council make Cllr. Seed aware of residents’ continuing concerns about flooding and also copy planning comments to Melksham Town Council.*

Residents from Snarlton Lane then left the Meeting. The Council then suspended Standing Orders again to enable a further period for public participation

430/10 **Public Participation (2)**
 Wiltshire Cllr. Roy While gave a report as follows:
Parking Charges and Transport: Wiltshire Council had been considering parking and transport issues. From April there would be charges in all car parks and some bus services would disappear. While Wiltshire Council was still encouraging the public to use buses, since charges were modest, upkeep costs had to be taken into account.

Leisure Review: Wiltshire Council had proposed to adopt the Leisure Review including the Campus proposals for Melksham. Indoor bowls would be retained at the Campus. Melksham was first in line for leisure changes. The timetable had slipped but work was due to begin before 2013. A Cabinet meeting would be held tomorrow.

Library Review: Some libraries would continue with reduced hours and 10 smaller libraries would be offered to the community so they could be run with volunteers. A decision re the location of Melksham Library had not yet been made. The Partnership Steering Group had met last Thursday to look at proposals. Their concern was to examine what changes would bring to the Melksham community. The main items were the swimming pool, the Christie Miller Centre and the future of the Library.

Elderly Care Strategy: The number of old people in the country would double by 2026 and it was important to look after them. The PCT now favoured more treatment at home. There was a run-down of care homes and the Order of St John homes would reduce but more specialist care housing facilities were being built. Wiltshire Council was moving toward this, but it would take time to get used to the new care system.

Wiltshire Council Budget: The Wiltshire Council Finance Officer would be addressing the Cabinet tomorrow and explaining the new Business Strategy. The good news was that there would be no increase in the Council Tax, as a result of juggling services. 240 Managers had been offered redundancy and 22 of them had accepted. He very much regretted that Wiltshire Council had lost one of its best planning officers in David Hubbard. The West Wilts. Planning Hub was merging with Kennet to make the Central Hub and a lot of planning officers had gone, including Rosy McGregor.

Cllr. Millard referred to elderly care at home. He emphasised elderly people needed to go into hospital from time to time. Dressings needed to be changed and night-care was needed sometimes but since no nurses now came out after 10.00 p.m. where were they meant to get care from?

The Chairman reported that he had raised the question of night-nursing at an Area Board meeting and had been told Wiltshire PCT had never planned to have a 24 hour care service.

Cllr. Nicol reported that she visited an elderly person who had an alarm button device around her neck. The problem was the only speaker on the premises was now in the living room, so if the lady was elsewhere when she needed help nobody could speak to her. Originally Selwood Housing used to have speakers in every room. A microphone device was needed on the actual button.

Cllr. While informed the latest system comprised a tracker device to find out where the person was.

Cllr. Glover asked if Wiltshire Council were giving away St John Homes and then building other new homes.

Cllr. While replied that Wiltshire Council still owned the St John Homes and did the refurbishment although St John staff actually run them.

Cllr. Coombes said he would try to attend the Cabinet meeting

The Council re-convened.

- 431/10 **Planning Committee Minutes 10th January: Resolved:** *The Minutes of this Meeting be approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.*
- 432/10 Arising from Min. 414/10 **Visit of Edward Lewis from First Homes:** The Council noted photos of a recent development carried out by First Homes in Cornwall.
- 433/10 Arising from Min. 418/10 **Local Centre Land:** The Chairman reported that this issue had been raised with Wiltshire Council officer Mike Kilmister at the Informal

Meeting held on 17th January. Mike Kilmister had reported that a letter from Ian Green of Persimmon Homes enclosing a Strategic Marketing Plan was on its way to him. As soon as this had been reviewed a Meeting with Parish Council representatives would be set up, to consider uses for the site. Mike Kilmister advised the Council to be clear on how it wished to see the site used, prior to meeting with developers. Cllr. Sankey asked how much the site was worth and suggested the Council carry out an independent valuation. Cllr. Millard suggested the Council find out the cost from the developer direct. It was noted Persimmon Homes had said the Council would not be able to afford the site. Cllr. Nicol emphasised the Government had pledged it would make it easier for parish councils to raise funds for local projects. The Clerk asked if the Council wished to reserve funds in the budget towards facilities on the site. Cllr. Glover emphasised the Council firstly needed to agree whether it wanted to do anything on the site. Cllr. Wood asked about loans and agreed a vision was needed for the site. Cllr. Baines felt it may be suitable for a community building. It was agreed to put an item in the Villager asking Bowerhill residents for their views on how the site should be used.

Resolved: *The Council contact local residents through the press, and the Villager, to ask for their views on how the Local Centre land should be used.*

434/10 **Planning Training:** The Clerk reported that Planning Area Manager Mike Wilmott had agreed to attend the Planning Meeting on 7th February but had asked for details of what topics should be covered. This meeting would be open to all members of the Council. It was agreed that members would let the Clerk know of any topics they wished to have discussed

Resolved: *The Council reply to invite Wilts Council Officer Mike Wilmott to the Planning Meeting on 7th February.*

A member of the public who was just leaving the Council indicated that he wished to speak. The Council agreed to suspend Standing Orders again.

435/10 **Public Participation (3)**

Affordable housing Corsham Road, Whitley: Mr Tom Wingfield reported that he had attended the Meeting on behalf of the landowner who owned the site which First Homes wished to use for affordable housing. He had come to find out if the Parish Council would support the development. The landowner did not wish to proceed with the sale of land if the scheme did not have Parish Council support.

The Chairman replied that the Parish Council did support this site in principle as it was one of the sites identified by the Parish Council as suitable for affordable housing. However the Council could not make a firm decision on this until it knew details of the scheme, residents' views and what benefits were being offered to the community.

Mr Wingfield emphasised the affordable housing would be for local people and the scheme would include some open market homes. This was noted.

The Council re-convened.

436/10 **PA M Land adjacent 491 Semington Road, Melksham. One detached dwelling and formation of new access. Revised plans.**

The Council considered the above planning application and made comment:

Comments: *The Council welcomes the fact that some of its earlier concerns have been met although it is felt the design of house is still pretty mediocre and unattractive.*

437/10 **Planning Correspondence**

(i) New Hall Plans, Berryfield – Informal Meeting 17th January: Representatives from the Parish Council and the Berryfield Hall Committee had attended this meeting. Planning Officer Mike Kilmister had apologised for the length of time taken to determine the application for a permanent Village Hall. The delay was due to new Hall site being on the proposed new line for the Wilts and Berks Canal. He had emphasised his need to clarify aspects of Wiltshire Council policy re the Wilts. and Berks. Canal, prior to making a decision and his concern to ensure that the new Hall project went ahead as well. Community representatives had made clear that the expiry date for the temporary hall was in December 2011 and Mike Kilmister had confirmed this could be extended. He had agreed to get in touch with the Parish Council as soon as policy matters had been clarified. The Clerk reported that Mike Kilmister had since rung to inform that officers involved with the canal were now addressing the issues.

(ii) MT10 04033 Residential development adjacent to Snarlton Lane: The Council noted a letter of concern from Snarlton Lane resident Mrs Manoli Crook

(iii) Garage Subsidence, 3 Beeches Green Shaw: The Clerk reported that the new owners of this property through their insurers were continuing to insist that trees and shrubs around part of the Shaw Playing Field boundary should be removed. It was agreed to hold a site meeting.

Resolved: *The councillors for Shaw and Whitley Ward and Cllr. Baines meet the Clerk and Caretaker on site to consider this matter.*

438/10 **Finance**

a) **Receipts:** None received

b) Accounts: It was noted that the hours of work for the Caretaker covered 8 weeks (2 months' payments) **Resolved:** *The following accounts be checked and approved for payment:*

3785*	Bowerhill Youth Club: 50% contribution to electrical work	£	35.25
	* Paid since the last meeting		
3786	Wiltshire Publications: Melksham News Quarterly Newsletter (£140) + VAT	£	164.50
3787	Bristol Wessex Billing Services: Water supply for Berryfield Allotments 16/6/10 – 17/12/10	£	162.46
3788	GB Sport & Leisure: Parts for Swing repairs, Shaw Play Area (£90.20) + VAT	£	108.24
3789	RM Software: 2 hrs PC Support (£90) + VAT	£	108.00
3790	British Telecom: Crown Chambers Telephone 01225 705700 (£85.15) + VAT	£	99.62
3791	Buildbase: Maintenance materials for office (£11.90) for Allotments (£9.05) + VAT	£	24.61
3792	Cllr Pat Nicol: To reimburse ingredients for mince pies (from Chair's Allowance £6.48) + bin bags for office (£1)	£	7.48

3793	Countrywide Farmers: Maintenance mtrls (£5.09) + VAT	£	5.98
Salaries:			
3794	Mrs Mary Jarvis: January salary + expenses (£5.80) + VAT	£	
3795	Mr Terry Cole: Hrs 20/11/10 – 8/1/11 (8 weeks) + travel allowance + mileage (£85.20)	£	
3796	Mrs Teresa Strange: January salary + expenses (cleaning materials £6.19 refreshments for mince pie supper £2.69 from Chair's Allowance) + VAT + Mileage (£26.40) SLCC Conference for M. Jarvis, T.Strange, M. Mylchreest	£	
3797	Mrs Margaret Mylchreest: January salary + expenses (£1.49)	£	
3798	Mrs Gill Butler: Casual hours 9/12/10 – 13/1/11 (14 hours)	£	
3799	Mrs Elaine Cranton: December office cleaning	£	
	Total Salaries:	£	3,401.79
3800	Inland Revenue: Tax & NI for Employer/ee less SSP recovered for M. Jarvis (-£211.32)	£	669.74
3801	Wiltshire Council – Wiltshire Pension Fund: Employer/ee Superannuation for M. Jarvis/T. Strange	£	608.14

b) Minutes of Finance Committee Budget Meetings held 8th November and 29th November: Resolved: *The Minutes of the Budget Meetings held on 8th November and 29th November were formally confirmed by the Council and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.*

439/10 Arising from Budget Meeting 29th November, Min. 363/10 **Funding Award for the Performance Review Grant:** The Council noted the conditions attached to the Grant Award of £6,550. It was noted that the signed Acceptance Form should be returned to Wiltshire Council as soon as all the funding for the Basketball Court was in place when a cheque would then be released. The project itself had to be completed within three months of receipt of the cheque. **Resolved:** *1. The Council formally note the Award and accept the conditions as stated above. 2. The Council forward the Acceptance Form to Wiltshire Council as soon as written confirmation was received that all funding was in place.*

440/10 Arising from Min. 363/10 **New Basketball Court – report re funding:** The Asst. Finance Officer Teresa Strange circulated a summary of quotations received to date. She reported that initially the Council had agreed to double the court to 10 metres x 10 metres. Then following the ROSPA report which indicated repairs were necessary to the existing surface, the Council decided to obtain quotations for 3 options:- a) the 10m x 10 m court extension with repairs to the existing court, b) an extension to make the court 12m x 24 m, plus repairs to the existing surface and c) to take up the existing court and put down a completely new court, 12m x 24m. Contractors had advised that Option B was not cost –effective and had quoted for Option C with differing options for goal ends. Two quotations had been received from local groundworks companies. It appeared the cheapest was to install the new court would

be to use a local company to do the groundworks and buy the goal ends from a sports equipment supplier. The cheapest quotation from a local Bristol company for Option C was £18,645, inclusive of a goal end without a net back. Existing funding amounted to £13,550, leaving a shortfall of £5,095. *Shaw Hall Committee was now re-considering whether to make a donation of £1,450, which still left a shortfall of £3,645. There was discussion re whether the project could go ahead using other funds. It was noted that there was a time limit for spending the Performance Review Grant of 3 months from receipt of the cheque. The Clerk advised the Council to consider doing the project in two stages by installing the court immediately and then adding the multi- goal ends at a later stage. This was not accepted. Cllr. Baines then proposed the Council defer the project until the next meeting on 21st February to allow for more time to seek other grant sources. This was agreed.

Resolved: *The Council defer this item until the next Council Meeting on 21st February (* Towards the end of the Meeting a phone call was received to inform Shaw Hall Committee had agreed to donate £1,450 towards this project.)*

441/10 **Council Budget and Precept for 2011/12:** The Council noted that Cllr. Petty would not be participating in items relating to the Council Budget and Precept.

The Council noted that the proposed rise in Precept of £5,000 to £104,000 for 2011/12 would result in the average Band D property paying an extra £1.87 per annum; a rise of 5.2% in the parish rate. (Wilts Council rates were rising by 4.7% for 2011/12) The Council noted that the Town Council was keeping its Precept at the same level, although it had a deficit and was therefore withdrawing financial support for the Melksham Community Partnership.

1st Proposal: Cllr. Baines, proposed, seconded by Cllr. Brindle, that the Budget with expenditure as detailed be formally approved.

Amendment to Proposal: Cllr. Glover explained that he did not support any rise in grant aid and proposed an amendment, seconded by Cllr. Millard, that the Precept remain at £99,000 for 2011/12 by reducing the amount for grants from £7,000 to £2,000. A vote was taken and the amendment was defeated by 6 votes to 5, with Cllrs. Glover, Clark, Millard, Sankey and Nicol supporting the amendment and Cllrs. Mills, Baines, Wood, Brindle, Coombes and Hubert opposing the amendment. Cllr. Petty abstained from the voting.

2nd Amendment to Proposal: Cllr. Wood then proposed a second amendment, seconded by Cllr. Coombes, that the grants be kept at the current year's level; (£6,000) and the Council precept for 2011/12 be £103,000. This amendment was defeated by 7 votes to 3 votes; Cllrs. Wood, Coombes and Hubert voted for the motion and Cllrs. Baines, Brindle, Glover, Clark, Mills, Sankey and Nicol voted against the motion, with Cllr. Millard and Cllr Petty abstaining from the vote.

Vote on Original Proposal: Cllr. Baines' original proposal, seconded by Cllr. Brindle for a Precept of £104,000 based on the expenditure as detailed in the Budget and Minutes of 8th November and 22nd November 2010 was then put to the vote. This proposal was accepted by 6 votes to 5 votes. Cllrs Baines, Brindle, Coombes, Hubert, Mills and Wood voted for this motion and Cllrs Clark, Glover, Millard, Nicol and Sankey voted against the motion. It was further agreed to put an item in the Melksham News to let residents know what the Precept for 2011/12 would be.

Resolved: *The Council Precept for 2011/12 be £104,000.*

442/10 **Grant matters**

a) **Grant to Melksham Choral Society:** The Council noted a letter of thanks for grant aid.

b) Parish Council Area Board Grant application for screen and computer:

It was noted that the grant application to the Area Board was for £467 (50% cost) The Council considered quotations for the new screen and computer

Resolved: *The quotation from R.M.Software in the sum of £1,067 + VAT be accepted, subject to a receipt of grant from the Area Board (£410 for computer, £495 Large Screen, £162 Link Equipment and installation costs)*

c) **Berryfield Hall – Youth Equipment:** The Chairman reported that Police Officer Janet Gould had expressed disappointment about the closure of the Berryfield Homework Club. It was noted that closure was due to Melksham Librarians being made redundant and the Infozone in the Library closing down. The Homework Club still had some funding left. Janet had also suggested that a pool table or table football be obtained for Berryfield Hall, via a grant aid to the Area Board. Cllr Petty reported that Berryfield Hall was too small for a pool table. Some of the equipment from the Homework Club had been offered to Beanacre Cricket Club but this had not been taken up. A letter would shortly be sent out to the Berryfield community asking for views on what could be done to help young people.

443/10 **Office Lease:** The Council noted that the present office lease ended in June 2012 and recognised the need for a Meeting of the Office Working Party to review future arrangements. Cllr. Millard suggested that the Council consider having an office at the new Pavilion building at Bowerhill. It was noted that the Council had also asked for space at the Campus.

Resolved: *The Council hold a Working Party Meeting and Cllrs. Mills, Wood, Brindle, Glover, Petty and Millard attend.*

444/10 **Minutes, Full Council 6th December:** **Resolved:** *The Minutes of this Meeting be formally approved by the Council and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.*

445/10 Arising from Min.384/10 **Flooding matters**

a) Community Flood Plan Workshop: A Workshop was being held in Chippenham on 26th January. Cllrs. Baines and Clark would be attending to represent the Council.

b) Flooding at Woodrow Road: Notes of a site meeting held on 17th January were circulated. Cllr. Baines reported that Wiltshire Council Flood Defence Officer Tim Bray had called together the farmer and residents to find a solution to the flooding problem and it had been agreed that if the farmer and residents shared the cost of materials. Wiltshire Council would provide the labour to install a new pipe along the full length of Mr Bourne's field. It was agreed to reply to a letter from Mr Buckland of Woodrow Road to explain progress made to date.

c) Flooding at Sandridge Road: Cllr. Millard drew attention to how flooding over A3102 in Sandridge Road was adversely affecting children who went to Forest and Sandridge School. Some parents and children had experienced great difficulty in getting to school during recent flooding.

446/10 Arising from Min. 388/10 **Footpath Improvements Scheme, Bowerhill:** The Clerk circulated recommendations from a recent meeting held in the office to agree details for new footpath signs at Bowerhill. The Chairman reported that the costs of the Improvements were being shared by Wiltshire Council, Bowerhill Residents' Action Group (BRAG) and the Parish Council. The recommendations were approved with one addition from Cllr. Brindle.

Resolved: Details of proposed new signs be now forwarded to the Rights of Way Officer Paul Millard for costing.

- 447/10 Arising from Min. 389/10 **Community Speedwatch – Woodrow:** Cllr. Baines reported that there was now a full team of six volunteers for Woodrow. The Police would be carrying out training on 2nd February 6.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m at Crown Chambers. The Clerk advised that the Council Insurance did not cover volunteers for any accidents. Cllr. Baines emphasised that risk assessments were done on the sites used. It was noted that Police Officer Barry Dalton was looking for more volunteers for Bowerhill.
- 448/10 Arising from Min. 391/10 **New Allotments, Berryfield:** The Clerk reported the draft Legal Agreement had now been drawn up together with a draft Pre-emption paper which gave the Council first option to buy the land. As soon as Mr Guley had approved these papers, the project could go ahead. Cllr. Glover reported that the problem with rats continued. It was agreed that Cllr. Rolf Brindle, the Allotment Warden and the Caretaker would do a spot check on all plots to see whether tenants had carried out the measures required by the Pest Control Officer. It was noted that the charge to connect water to the site was £4,453 and payment had to be made in advance of the work being done. It was agreed that authorisation be given for this payment to be made as soon as the legal paperwork had been completed.
Resolved: The Council authorise payment of £4,453 + VAT to Wessex Water and the cheque and order for this work be sent as soon as the legal paperwork had been completed.
- 449/10 Arising from Min. 391/10 **New Allotments, Berryfield:** The Clerk requested permission to attend a Course on setting up new allotments on 17th March. This was agreed.
Resolved: The Clerk attend the Course on 17th March.
- 450/10 Arising from Min. 398/10 **Area Board issues & Campus:** The Chairman reported that Cllr. Roy While was seeking to set up an informal meeting between Council representatives, Nikki Lewis and Cllr. Jonathan Seed to discuss issues raised by the Council. This meeting would be held shortly. Letter received from the Melksham Area Partnership Co-Coordinator Miriam Zacarrelli, to inform that the Partnership would be organising consultation about the Campus proposals. It was agreed to invite Miriam to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 21st March.
Resolved: The Council invite Miriam to carry out consultation re the Campus at the Annual Parish meeting on 21st March.
- 451/10 Arising from Min. 404/10 **Vision Wiltshire Police Consultation:** The Chairman advised members to submit individual comments re proposed changes to the Police Service. The closing date for comment was 11th February.
- 452/10 Arising from Min. 406/10 **Safety at Bromham Junction:** Cllr. Millard reported that this junction with A3012 was extremely dangerous. Just a few days ago a 40 tonne juggernaut had almost hit a car which was emerging from the Bromham junction. Traffic came towards the junction at great speed and some type of warning device was needed. It was agreed to bring this to the Area Board's attention by completing an issue sheet online.
Resolved: The Council raise this as an issue with the Melksham Area Board
- 453/10 **New street signs, Berryfield:** A second letter was received from Berryfield resident Mr Newman to request two new signs and to indicate on a map where the new signs

were needed. It was agreed to forward these requests to Wiltshire Council Highways Team. **Resolved:** *The Council ask Wiltshire Council to install two new signs and reply to the resident to tell him what action the Council had taken.*

454/10 **Village Name signs for Berryfield and Bowerhill:** The Clerk reported she had received an email from the Wilts. Council Senior Traffic Management Technician Kate Davey to inform Wiltshire Council supported having a new name plate for Bowerhill and this would be installed on the new 40 m.p.h. speed limit sign posts as one entered Bowerhill on the Devizes Road. For Berryfield there did not seem a safe place to position a sign. Cllr. Petty informed that a new name sign for Berryfield had already been installed.

455/10 **Bus Services at Bowerhill during inclement weather:** Cllr. Glover reported that during the recent spell of snowy weather, Bowerhill was left without any bus services. Buses only went as far as the Spa roundabout although they could easily have picked people up at the bottom of Falcon Way. If buses could not get to Bowerhill, they could stop on A365 for both directions. Initially main bus routes such as Halifax Road were not even gritted. The Chairman emphasised that all bus routes and main footways needed to be gritted. Cllr Petty agreed that all bus routes should be a priority for salting. Cllr. Millard emphasised bus companies could use the radio or wardens to communicate.
Resolved: *The Council write to Wiltshire Council to emphasise that bus routes should be salted as a priority in bad weather and alternative pick up points found on A365 for Bowerhill, if roads there were impassable*

456/10 **Duplication of Bus Services:** The Chairman reported that several residents had complained about buses following each other around a specific route, and occasionally trying to overtake each other in an attempt to pick up passengers. Faresaver and First travelled at the same time to Bath, rather than allowing an interval between to give an overall more frequent service. Cllr. Baines informed that buses were allowed to compete in this manner on commercial services.
Resolved: *The Council make representations to Traffic Commissioner and send a copy of the Council's letter to MP Duncan Hames.*

457/10 **Minutes, Sports Field Working Party, 17th January 2011:** **Resolved:** *The Working Party Minutes of 17th January be formally approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.*

458/10 Arising from Min. 422/10 **Sports Field Security:** Keys for the bollards had now been received. The Clerk reported that she had passed on contract and security concerns to Wilts. Council Officer Ian Brown and was awaiting his response.

459/10 Arising from Min.423/10 **Legal Matters:** The Clerk reported that she had received an email from the Solicitor who wished to meet with Council representatives, prior to finalising the Legal Agreement with Wiltshire Council. It was agreed to hold a Sports Field Working Party on Monday 7th February, after the Planning Meeting.

460/10 **Melksham Sports Forum:** The Clerk advised that the Forest Community Centre Committee had now agreed to forward a copy of their plans to the Council. It was agreed that a Meeting of the Melksham Sports Forum would be held when they were received.

461/10 **Changes to Health Services in Wiltshire:** It was noted that the management of Wiltshire Community Services was to be transferred to the Great Western Hospital

NHS Foundation Trust and from April 2011 the purchase of community services were to be taken over by GPs. In view of this, the Council considered a draft letter to NHS Wiltshire, composed by Cllr. Clark to request details of the proposed transfer of services in terms of expenditure, service levels and staffing. Cllr. Clark explained that this information would then provide a baseline to monitored future actual services and staffing. The Council expressed their support for Cllr. Clark's initiative and agreed to send the letter to NHS Wiltshire and copy it to the Melksham Health Forum.

Resolved: *The Council send a letter to NHS Wiltshire, to request the information detailed above.*

462/10 **Meadow land between Wellington Drive and Falcon Way:** Cllr. Glover declared an interest in this item as a resident of Wellington Drive. He asked the Council to consider if it would be beneficial to register this land as a new Village Green. This was agreed in principle. It was noted that this was a complex procedure statements would need to be completed to confirm the land had been used "without let or hindrance" for at least 20 years. The Chairman suggested that BRAG may be willing to help complete the paperwork. It was further agreed to obtain the necessary forms and Guidance notes and then consider this matter again. **Resolved:** *1. The Council agree in principle to request registration of the Meadow land between Wellington Drive and Falcon Way as a new Village Green and ask Wiltshire Council as the Commons Registration Authority to forward the necessary paperwork.*

463/10 **General Correspondence for action**

(i) **Improvements to Rail Network between Swindon and Salisbury:** A Survey was taking place to demonstrate support from businesses, organisations and residents for an improved rail service for Melksham. The Closing date for a response was 18th February. **Resolved:** *The Council participate in the Survey and give full support to better rail services between Swindon and Salisbury.*

(ii) **LCR Opinion Survey re parish council clustering:** The Local Council Review was carrying out a survey to find out if parish councils would be willing to work in clusters for representation, service delivery and campaign purposes. **Resolved:** *The Council reply to affirm willingness to work in a cluster for these purposes.*

464/10 **General Correspondence for information:** The Council noted receipt of the following papers:

- a) Wilts.Council Parish Newsletter January 2011-02-09
- b) NALC Media release re new Localism Bill
- c) NALC Direction Information Service newsletter
- d) WALC January Circular with enclosures.
- e) Paper from Government re abolition of the Standards Board
- f) Conservative newsletter from Cllr. Roy While
- g) Great Poppy Weekend brochure from Royal British Legion

Meeting closed at 10. 10 p.m.

Chairman, 21st February 2011

