MINUTES of the Staffing Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 19th October 2026 at Melksham Without Parish Council Office (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors Alan Baines, Mark Blackham, John Glover (Chair of Council), David Pafford (Vice-Chair of Council) and Anne Sullivan (Chair of Staffing Committee).

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk).

Councillor Harris attended remotely via Zoom for part of the meeting, as an observer.

No members of the public were present.

233/26 Welcome, Announcements and Housekeeping

The Chair welcomed those present. As there were no members of the public present, the usual housekeeping announcements were not repeated. Everyone present was aware that the meeting was being recorded and would be published on YouTube following the meeting until the minutes were approved.

234/26 Apologies

Councillor Hemmings was not present.

235/26 Vice-Chair of Staffing Committee for 2026/27

Following Councillor Griffiths stepping down as a councillor, members discussed potential nominees, including Councillors Hemmings and Pafford. The election of Vice-Chair was deferred. Councillor Pafford could deputise for the Chair for this meeting if required.

Resolved: To defer the election of Vice-Chair until the next Staffing Committee meeting.

236/26 Declarations of Interest

The Clerk declared an interest in staffing matters affecting her employment and advised that she would leave the room for consideration of her own appraisal under agenda item 10. No other declarations were recorded.

237/26 To consider holding items in Closed Session

The Committee agreed that agenda items 9 to 12 would be considered in closed session because of the confidential staffing information involved. Members also agreed to take agenda item 10 last, allowing the Clerk to remain for the Health and Safety and Staff Wellbeing discussions before leaving the meeting for her appraisal discussion.

The public minutes would record confidential items in summary only, with any sensitive supporting detail retained in accordance with Standing Order 11(e).

Resolved: That the public and press be excluded during consideration of agenda items 9 to 12 under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, owing to the confidential nature of the business.

238/26 Public Participation

. There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

239/26 HR Support

a) Feedback following introductory meeting with CHRGS (Council HR and Governance Support)

The Clerk reported on the introductory meeting with the Council's external HR adviser, CHRGS. The adviser had raised no immediate concerns regarding the Council's existing approach to annual leave recorded in hours, HMRC mileage rates, recruitment timing or use of the existing employment contract pending a wider review.

The adviser recommended expressly documenting the arrangements for officers deputising within their respective areas of responsibility during the Clerk's absence. Members noted that the Parish Officer and Finance & Amenities Officer already had deputising responsibilities within their job descriptions, but that the associated authority should also be set out clearly in the Scheme of Delegation. There was no requirement to appoint a formal Deputy Clerk.

Recommendation: That Full Council approve an amendment to the Council's Scheme of Delegation to authorise the Parish Officer and Finance & Amenities Officer to undertake routine Proper Officer and administrative functions during the Clerk's absence, within their respective areas of responsibility and specialism, subject to their job descriptions, the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, adopted policies and existing limits on delegated authority.

b) HR policies, procedures, appraisal documentation and model contract

Members considered the suite of model policies supplied by CHRGS and the Clerk's proposed phased review programme. Members questioned whether some standalone policies could be grouped into broader documents, whether duplication or inconsistency could arise, and whether the policies would accurately reflect the Council's working practices. Other members recognised the value of having suitable policies in place in advance of individual staffing situations, supported by updates and advice from the specialist HR provider.

The Committee supported reviewing the policies in manageable groups and considering possible overlap, consolidation and practical implementation. Queries raised about the scope of the policies, responsibility for periodic reviews and CHRGS's professional indemnity arrangements would be referred to CHRGS. Documents

primarily concerning IT, data protection and artificial intelligence would be referred initially to the IT Working Party, with staffing implications brought back as appropriate.

Right to Work Policy

The Committee reviewed the draft Right to Work Policy provided by CHRGS and agreed a number of amendments to reflect the Council's existing arrangements and procedures. The agreed changes are detailed in the amended policy at Appendix A.

Recommendation: That Full Council approve and adopt the Right to Work Policy, as amended by the Staffing Committee and attached at Appendix A.

Recruitment Policy

The Committee reviewed the draft Recruitment Policy provided by CHRGS and agreed amendments to ensure that the policy reflected the Council's recruitment procedures and committee arrangements. The agreed changes are detailed in the amended policy at Appendix B.

Recommendation: That Full Council approve and adopt the Recruitment Policy, as amended by the Staffing Committee and attached at Appendix B.

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Committee reviewed the draft Equal Opportunities Policy provided by CHRGS, taking into account the Council's existing Equality and Diversity Policy. Members agreed amendments to ensure that the policy was appropriate and proportionate to the Council's circumstances. The agreed changes are detailed in the amended policy at Appendix C.

Recommendation: That Full Council approve and adopt the Equal Opportunities Policy, as amended by the Staffing Committee and attached at Appendix C, to replace the Council's existing Equality and Diversity Policy.

Review timetable and employment contract

The Committee discussed a further Staffing Committee meeting on Monday 23rd November 2026 to consider the model employment contract, appraisal documentation and related performance-management policies. Further groups of staffing policies would be considered during January/February and March/April 2027, subject to the Council’s committee timetable and the Clerk’s further analysis of the policy suite.

The Committee reaffirmed its preference to use the Council’s existing 2023 employment contract for the new Allotment Warden, avoiding inconsistent terms while the wider contract review was undertaken. Detailed consideration of the new appraisal documentation was deferred to the proposed November meeting.

Resolved: That the Council’s existing 2023 employment contract continue to be used for the new Allotment Warden pending the wider contract review. Consideration of the

new appraisal documentation and associated performance-management policies was deferred to the proposed November Staffing Committee meeting.

240/26 Annual Leave Calculation Policy

The Committee considered the draft policy to calculate and record annual leave in hours rather than days, following the Council's earlier decision in principle. Members noted the advantages for part-time and flexible working arrangements and the ability to record shorter periods of absence accurately. CHRGS had raised no concerns provided full contractual entitlements were preserved.

Recommendation: That Full Council approve and adopt the Annual Leave Calculation Policy considered by the Committee, following the Council's previous approval in principle of recording annual leave in hours rather than days.

241/26 Recruitment – Allotment Warden (Closed Session)

Held in closed session.

a) Appointment following recommendation of Interview Panel

The Committee considered the recommendation of the Interview Panel.

Resolved: To approve the appointment of Tim Myers as Allotment Warden under the Committee's delegated powers, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks and contractual arrangements.

Members also considered proposed amendments to the Allotment Warden job description.

Recommendation: That Full Council approve the revised Allotment Warden job description, incorporating the amendments considered by the Staffing Committee on 19th October 2026.

b) Salary scale point and contractual particulars

The Committee considered the salary and contractual arrangements for the appointment.

Resolved: To approve the salary scale point and contractual arrangements detailed in the separate confidential supporting notes.

242/26 Health and Safety

The Clerk reported no new health and safety incidents since the previous meeting.

This item was held in Closed Session.

Members expressed concern about the timely completion and recording of remedial work arising from play-area inspections. The Committee supported closer tracking, clear reporting on outstanding tasks and an audit trail of actions requested and completed, so that inspection findings were dealt with promptly.

243/26 Staff Wellbeing

Held in closed session.

The Committee considered arrangements for officers responding to incidents outside normal working hours. The Clerk clarified that the matter had been raised for members' awareness rather than as a complaint or request for additional remuneration.

Members expressed concern about staff wellbeing and personal safety, particularly where officers attended incidents alone.

Resolved: That options for remuneration or time off in lieu (TOIL), together with the possibility of using the Council's security contractor for out-of-hours call-outs, be investigated and reported back to the Staffing Committee for further consideration.

244/26 Clerk's Appraisal

Held in closed session.

The Clerk withdrew from the meeting for consideration of her appraisal and associated employment matters.

Recommendation: That Full Council consider the recommendation arising from the Clerk's appraisal, as detailed in the separate confidential recommendation record dated 19th October 2026.

The meeting closed at 8:55pm.

Chairman, 9th November 2026