

Questions to Melksham Town Council on 15th May 2023 in public participation at Full Council (and then confirmed in writing)

Answers provided and copied to all councillors by the Town Clerk on 6th June 2023

Who is in charge of the street cleaning and decides what to clean?

Wiltshire Council are responsible. However, that is not to say that on occasion the town council Amenities Team will carry out street cleaning if deemed necessary.

Who is in charge of events such as carnival, platinum jubilee and coronation.

The Town Council through the Events Working Group and Community Development Committee.

How are new events planned? And what new events are planned including the local community?

Through the Events Working Group and Community Development Committee. The public mainly become aware of events through social media and the website.

There was a survey put out about ideas for the King's Coronation, we were not inundated with responses, that said the Events Working Group and Community Development Committee used the most popular answers to influence the final choices for celebrating.

The town council through the Market Towns Initiative grant funding have commissioned someone to work on an Events Strategy for the town which will be publicised, and the public will be part of the deliberations.

Decision to put it to public? The public voted for the park? How many voted overall? And what majority was in favour of the park?

Can you clarify what decision was put to the public? Voted for the park? In what way not following, sorry.

The website for the town council, is it mobile phone friendly?

Yes it is, when the new website the new accessibility rules were taken on board for laptops and mobile phone usage.

How many attended the recent events in the park?

The King's Coronation was severely affected by the weather there was a steady stream all day and it is estimated about 80-100 throughout the day.

Are there funds for additional CCTV. Not manned but something to refer to in the event of a crime in areas currently vulnerable

The council have invested in some rapid deployable cameras. We would need to work with the Police who would identify where crime is occurring, and the necessary procedures and protocols put in place to erect a rapid deployable camera. There are permanent CCTV cameras located at various places throughout the town centre too.

Flowers, roundabout, war memorial, weeding? Budget and who's responsibility.

The Town Council are responsible for areas within its ownership and do provide the maintenance for the areas you have listed.

Can volunteers take over the planting and costs of certain areas within the town, and the town council continue with watering?

This is something that would be welcomed within certain parameters, i.e., Highways safety etc.

Long-term planting to give structure all year round to keep costs down in these tough times?

Sustainable planting is something the town council is slowly moving toward.

Volunteers, how does this work normally?

The Town Council has worked extremely closely with Melksham Bloomers so working with volunteers is normal achievable and a great way of involving the community.

Budget? How much cash does the town council have to dispose of and who decides how the money is allocated?

The budget is set each year by the town council following a lengthy process beginning in September with the final budget being agreed upon in January. The council has to consider all of the commitments it must meet in the following financial year and then look at any projects it wishes to undertake. The town council does not have any disposable income.

Proposed Lighting in the park? Is there a cost? How was the decision arrived at? Was this something that the public wanted?

Full council committed to lighting the park following a consultation and also further requests for lights based on safety grounds. The cost is £63,000.

Town hall flags and banners? Who funds this?

The town council purchases the flags. The banners have been made and donated by a wonderful lady called Terri Welch, a former councillor.

The late queen's postage stamp decorations, where do they go once used?

They are returned to Terri Welch.

Festive Lighting? Is this put out to tender each year? How are contracts awarded?

The Festive Lighting is funded through a grant of £10,000 each year which is paid to Melksham Christmas Lights volunteers. It does not go out to tender.

Christmas tree? Is there a real one this year? Or is it set to be the light tree? Should this be put to the public to decide but one or the other, not have a real one tucked around the corner? Perhaps smaller ones as a large display, if costs are a problem?

It is set to be an electronic tree again this year with a real tree to the side again which it is hoped will be a 'wishing tree'. Not everything the town council does has to go out to public consultation. Councillors are elected to represent the community and act in the best interests of the community when making decisions affecting the community in the council chamber.

What feedback was received for the carbon footprint cube? Were schools actively involved in this as the message was it somewhat lost?

Agreed and I am not sure about school involvement, I will need to investigate. That said the carbon cube did generate discussions which were useful.

Map of the main part of town with a key to highlight all shops and what they offer, open spaces, churches, walks, pubs, restaurants, buildings of historical

significance etc. for those who arrive in the town as tourist in a leaflet form and a larger display of this in a prominent location?

Great idea, this is something that our Community Hub is hoping to tackle, a live website with all of this information which will be constantly up to date unlike a printed version which will go out of date.

A scarecrow festival or something on these lines for all businesses to participate. For the public to enjoy as a competition.

Ah yes, we discussed this when we met, and I suggested perhaps we could be different and do a Guy Fawkes trail. Something for the Events Working Group to look at. You are most welcome to attend this working group and become a member if you wish.