



# MELTON PARISH COUNCIL

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**MPC(21)99**

## **COVERING NOTE TO THE MELTON TRUST REPORT**

The report accompanying this covering note (MPC(21)99a) was prepared by the two Trustees nominated by Melton Parish Council after a meeting with me on 26 May 2021, following consideration of an initial report by Full Council on 17 March. The report reproduces the Minute of that meeting on 17 March in its first paragraph, which summarises what was agreed by Councillors. The proposals in this further paper now also need to be considered by Full Council. They have previously been discussed by Finance, Employment and Risk Management (FERM) Committee at its meeting on 28 July.

The intention behind the detailed proposals is to shift the responsibility for all administrative functions relating to the Trust to the Council. The Trustees will continue to manage the Trust; there is no intention for it to become a Council managed Trust; but with Council staff carrying out all routine duties in relation to its functions. Overall the paper estimates that the work could take on average up to 57 hours a year, or an average of 4.75 hours a month.

Full Council is invited to consider this proposal.

The minute of the discussion at FERM Committee (FRM(21)31) reads as follows:

The Clerk presented the report prepared by two Trustees together with his covering note. This report is intended for submission to Full Council at its meeting in September 2021, but he felt it was important for it to be considered by FERM Committee beforehand. The report proposes that the responsibility for all the Trust's administrative functions is assumed by Council staff. The paper estimates that the work could take on average up to 57 hours a year, or an average of 4.75 hours a month.

The covering note addresses the issues that need to be considered. These include:

- Unless the Council specifically wishes to grant aid the Trust under s137 Local Government Act 1972, there will need to be an agreement to reimburse the Council for its services.

- To offer grant aid the Council would have to be satisfied that the Trust operates for the benefit of the inhabitants of the parish and that the benefit is commensurate with the sum expended.
- A clear legally binding service level agreement would need to be in place to regulate the services that are to be provided.
- Issues of staffing resources.

Following a lengthy discussion **it was unanimously AGREED** to recommend to Full Council that the proposals in the Melton Trust report should not be accepted, and that the Trust should seek to employ someone in a part-time capacity to undertake this work.

The Trustees have in the light of the recommendation by FERM Committee now submitted a further paper for Councillors to consider:

***Note to members of Full Council 22 September 2021***

**Agenda Item 21.99 TO CONSIDER REPORT RELATING TO THE MELTON TRUST**

Papers MPC(21)99 and MPC(21)99a

Dear Councillor,

You will see that this item has been reviewed by FERM who unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council that the proposals in the Melton Trust report should not be accepted, and that the Trust should seek to employ someone in a part-time capacity to undertake this work. With an income of around £12,000 p.a. we are not in a position to do that. We were not present at that meeting and cannot comment on the nature of the FERM discussions but as the Trustees nominated by the Council we would encourage you not to accept the FERM recommendation for the following reasons:

- The Council has previously expressed its willingness to provide more support to the Trust
- The Trustees are not expecting to *shift the responsibility for all administrative functions relating to the Trust to the Council*, rather, we identified those responsibilities which could be transferred to a third party. Working with the Clerk, we determined very conservative estimates of the work involved to create an estimate of the work involved. You will see that the number of transactions is very low.
- Most of this work is currently carried out by the Council's nominated Trustees one of whom will be standing down in the near future together with 2 of the co-opted Trustees.
- The Trust is built around the 3 pillars of Church, Council and Community. Whilst we have strengthened our links to the community through our relationship with Melton Primary School, we are receiving limited support from the Church and lack of further support from the Council could put the future of the Trust at risk.

But most important of all, the Trust exists to support the most disadvantaged residents of Melton and during the last 12 months alone we have provided:

- Support to a single parent family impacted by moving from employment to Universal Credit
- A winter coat to a pensioner
- A breakfast club place for a vulnerable child
- Decorating materials, kitchen appliances and furniture to families in accommodation requiring improvement
- Grants to support other organisations helping Melton residents such as the Salvation Army food bank.

Without your support similar help may not be available in the future as the Trust may have to be wound up in some way.

## **Recommendation**

Full Council is requested to consider the request by the Trustees as set out in their report at MPC(21)99a in the light of:

1. The recommendation made by FERM Committee following its meeting on 28 July as set out above, and
2. The further paper now submitted by the Trustees in support of their request.

William Grosvenor

Clerk and Executive Officer to the Council

20 September 2021