**Town Centre Working Group – Terms of Reference**

**Name: Town Centre Working Group**

**Background**

At the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee meeting held on 20 October 2015, it was minuted and resolved to form a Town Centre Working Group.

It was agreed that the Working Group would need to work closely with existing town centre groups.

**Members:**

Members are:

* Cllr Linda Emery (Chair)
* Cllr Helena Fickling
* Cllr Mary Stiles
* Graham Hunt (Town Clerk) or Cassie Pinnells (Community Services Manager)
* Market Town Co-Ordinator (when recruited)
* SODC Economic Development representative
* Additional Councillors and community members to be invited as and when their expertise or input is required. This will include 21st Century Thame, Thame Centre First, Market Traders Co-operative and other relevant organisations.

Secretarial support (agendas, meeting notes, circulation of information) is provided by Graham Hunt / Cassie Pinnells.

Quorum is three members of the group, including two Councillors.

**Goals:**

1. To ensure that Thame remains an attractive tourist destination and a positive retail experience.
2. To retain and enhance our vibrant Charter Market.
3. To build on the existing events programme and to identify future possible events.
4. To resolve the ongoing debate on the relevance of a market town co-ordinator. **[Complete]**
5. To resolve the definition of a Town Team.
6. To work closely with the SODC Economic Development Team and assist the delivery of the Action Plan (see deliverables section).
7. To execute town centre survey / census. e.g. to identify all the retail establishments in the town centre; summarise this data to determine number of business types (estate agents, pubs and restaurants, charity shops, independents, vacancy levels etc.)
8. To execute surveys of the public to determine if they require more or less of the types of business in the town centre (e.g. Fast food, estate agents, charity shops, convenience goods, comparison goods etc.).
9. To influence the type of new retail business.
10. To assist communication between the various groups working on Town Centre vitality
11. To help ensure the right way forward whichever way the Tesco planning application is resolved.
12. To progress the proposed independent study in to the best ways to maintain the vibrancy and vitality of Thame town centre. **[Complete]**
13. To learn from current events in the town centre; e.g. Food Festival, Art & Literature Festival, Christmas Light Switch on, Continental Markets etc.
14. To market Thame as a tourist destination.
15. To cater for the impact of future population growth, including assessment of car parking needs and means of provision.

**Specific Neighbourhood Plan Policies**

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| WS1 | Locate new retail development – Monitor retail floor space through the town |
| WS2 | Retain and enhance primary / secondary retail frontages. |
| WS3 | Redevelop the postal sorting office and telephone exchange for retail. |
| WS4 | Develop the Fire Station site for a use that supports the town centre. |
| WS5 | Develop land at no. 10 High Street for a use that supports the town centre. |
| WS6 | Permit small shops in allocated residential areas. |
| WS7 | Retain small scale employment in the town centre. |
| WS8 | Encourage a range of uses by supporting new residential use on upper floors. |
| WS9 | Monitor loss of residential units. |
| WS10 | Encourage adverse range of uses by avoiding loss of residential loss. |
| WS12 | Retain existing employment land in employment use. |
| WS13 | Support improvements to existing employment areas |
| WS14 | Redevelop Cattle Market site for mixed use. |
| WS15 | Ensure Redevelopment of Cattle Market links into Town Centre. |
| GA1 | Pedestrian and Cycle connection improvements. |
| GA4 | Encourage better planning of public transport. |
| GA5 | Retain long term public parking in Cattle Market. |
| GA6 | New development to provide parking on site for occupants and visitors. |
| CLW1 | Allocate land for new community facilities. |
| CLW2 | Consult local people in ongoing consultation. |

**Deliverables**

A time-lined and costed action list with clear responsibilities to deliver the defined goals.

**Scope / Jurisdiction**

The Group is required to:

* only work on projects within Thame civic parish with concentration on Thame Town Centre
* provide an update report to each meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee and to contribute to the Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Report.

**Guidance from the Council / Parent Committee**

Provided at initial resolution and after each meeting report back to the parent Committee.

**Resources and Budget**

The Group will be allowed use of Town Council meeting rooms, administration resources and officer time as required. Any funding authorisation is to be sought from the parent Committee or Full Council, in conjunction with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan Working Group as necessary.

**Governance**

Decisions to be agreed mostly by consensus, but where necessary a majority vote of those present, with Chairperson’s casting vote if necessary.

**Additional Notes:**

* Methods of work (e.g. consultations, press releases, surveys, studies, progress reports, letters etc) are entirely up to the Working Group to decide.
* The Group will communicate through email, phone and meetings, both formally and informally.
* Relevant documentation is stored in the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee folder on the Town Council IT data store, plus in member’s e-mail folders.
* The group will meet at a frequency required to ensure progress as required.
* Sub-groups (with other nominated members) can be created as necessary to progress specific items.
* The Working Group’s work is ongoing by nature, but its longevity will be determined by the parent Committee.

These Terms of Reference may be reviewed and changed as necessary by the Working Group in the light of additional information, with significant changes requiring authorisation by the parent Committee.