

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee held on 25 October 2016 at 6.30pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs N Champken-Woods (Chairman), M Deacock, M Dyer, L Emery (Town Mayor), M Stiles (Deputy Chairman) and T Wyse

Non-Voting

Cllr H Fickling

Officers

G Hunt, Town Clerk

J Howells, Asset Manager

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs Butler (Holiday), Cowell (Business), Dixon (Business), Jones (Holiday), Lambert (Holiday).

2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Public Participation and Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Committee.

There were no questions put to the Committee.

4 Thame Town Live Music Festival

Mr Jon Littler thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to present his proposal for a Thame Town Music Festival on Saturday 8 July 2017. The plan was to hold a free multi-venue, multi-music genre, town centre based festival of live music free of charge, aimed at families in Thame and the wider community.

Mr Littler had lived in Thame for over 20 years and felt that the festival would add to the cultural and diverse festivals and activities that already took place in the town and to the economic life of the high street. The First Thursday Music Club (FTMC) was established in 2010 operating in the Stables behind the James Figg public house. To date over 700 acts had performed to a combined audience of 10,000 people with monthly audiences regularly exceeding 250 people. FTMC had also run stages at Towersey and Beaconfest festivals and Thame Carnival.

The vision was to create an annual music festival in the town centre where, in the style of Edinburgh Festival, everywhere could be a potential venue and publish a programme so that festival goers could plan a day and evening to see several different kinds of live music performance. The long term objective was to design, build, finance and operate a new performance venue for Thame to accommodate 3-400 people.

It was hoped to raise funding for the festival through sponsorship, grants, advertising, stall holder fees, merchandising, etc. The festival would not be a commercial venture and a Community Interest Company would be set up. The organising committee was keen for a councillor to be a member and perhaps Chair the committee. This would help to establish the partnership between the festival organisers and the Town Council. The Committee was seeking the help of the Town Council with permission to have the main stage in the car park outside the Town Hall, the associated road closures, access to the Town Hall and seed funding of £5k with the festival being self-funded in subsequent years. The aim was to start with a small scale approach to prove the concept and if successful grow the festival over the next few years in co-operation with the Town Council.

After answering a series of further questions Jon was thanked for his presentation. Members agreed that the festival was a wonderful idea and should wholeheartedly be supported.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Town Council supports the proposals to hold a Thame Town Music Festival in the Town Centre in 2017.*
- ii) The request to provide £5k seed funding be considered at the next meeting of the Budget Working Group.*

5 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 Budget Summary

Members received the budget summary up to 30 September 2016.

7 Reports from Representatives on External Organisations

- a) Cuttle Brook Management Committee – Reported noted.
- b) Thame Carnival Committee – Report noted.
- c) Thame Football Partnership – Report noted.
- d) Twinning Association – Report noted.
- e) Thame Good Neighbour Scheme – Report noted.
- f) Cricket Club (Cllr Champken-Woods) – Report noted.
- g) Chinnor RFC – It was noted that the Rugby Club were doing extremely well this season. Copies of the Match Day Programme (with fixture list) and the Youth Rugby Season Programme were available for Councillors.
- h) Music in the Park – Cllr Stiles reported that £500 had been granted to Lighthouse and £250 to Thame Youth Projects from the money raised at this year's event.
- i) Red Kite Childrens Centre – Presentation – agenda item 8.
- j) Sinaia Friendship Association – Report noted.
- k) Thame Museum Trust – Report noted.
- l) Thame Remembers – Report noted. Cllr Dyer reported that a wreath had been laid at the site of a wreck of a ship which had sunk during the War. A Lieutenant Commander from Thame had lost his life when the ship went down. The wreath was laid from the Half Deck of the Queen Mary II on its journey from New York to the UK on Tuesday 18 October 2016 in the presence of a small group of senior officers, members of staff and passengers.
- m) Towersey Festival – Report noted.

8 Red Kite Children's Centre

Mr Jon Hulett thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to provide an update on the current situation with regard to the Children's Centre. In a local context there were 1,135 children aged under five living in Thame and Chinnor and although an affluent area there were significant pockets of deprivation.

The Children's Centre was run in an adapted centre, formally the library, in Rooks Lane with a satellite room and outdoor play area at Chinnor library and managed by Action For Children on behalf of the County Council. The Centre provided a full programme of activities aimed at pre-school children open to all children of that age regardless of background or family income. The Health Authority made good use of the facility and would want to continue to do so in the future. The Centre was rated 'Good' by Ofsted following the last assessment.

The statistics indicated that a very high portion of the children eligible to receive support were registered with the Centre which was a credit to the staff who run the Centre and showed the level of trust the community placed in the staff. The Centre provided a valuable service which the town did not want to lose. County Council funding would finish in March 2017.

Sharing Life Trust (SLT) provided support in the form of the foodbank, funds to support some activities and food produce for the cookery club. The Thame Alliance Group (TAG), an inter-agency forum initiated by the Town Council and SLT provided a good communication link between local agencies and voluntary community groups. The Red Kite Advisory Group was also represented at TAG meetings.

TAG held a special meeting with corporate representatives from the County Council and agreed in principle that it should do everything it could to safeguard the work of the Children's Centre. A working group was established with members from the Town Council, the Advisory Group, churches and local voluntary organisations and a business plan put together. Key issues identified include; what aspects of the current provision did we want to keep going? How to engage the whole community? How much would it all cost?

The annual cost of running the centre was estimated to be £80,000. SLT have offered to provide £20,000 in the first year and it was hoped that other local charities would be able to give support. The County Council will provide a transition fund of £30k to be spent over three years and the group hoped that the Town Council would look favourably on providing £10,000 of funding in the first year.

After answering a series of further questions John was thanked for his presentation. Members agreed that the Town Council should support the efforts being made to keep the Red Kite Children's Centre open and that the request for funding would be considered at the next meeting of the Budget Working Group.

9 Thame Day Centre

Cllr Champken-Woods reported that the Thame Day Centre was in exactly the same position as the Red Kite Children's Centre with £35,000 of annual funding being withdrawn by the County Council in 2017. The biggest problem would be how to pay the annual rent charge of £27,000 to Buckinghamshire Health. Clients of the Day Centre did pay £10 per session in return for which they took part in the activities and had a two course hot meal.

A request for funding from the Town Council would be taken to the next meeting of the Budget Working Group for further discussion.

10 Church Meadow – Telecoms Apparatus

The Town Council had been approached by Shared Access in relation to the installation of telecoms apparatus at Church Meadow Cricket Ground. There were advantages and disadvantages to

consider, one main disadvantage being the impact on the Conservation Area. A key advantage would be the potential revenue income which would help to elevate some of the current budget pressures.

Members agreed that it would be churlish to dismiss the approach out of hand and requested that further information be obtained.

RESOLVED that:

- i) A meeting is arranged with Shared Access to gain further information.***

11 Town Flag

Members noted that the recently installed flag pole outside the Town Hall was used on fewer than 30 days a year. The rest of the time it was empty which had raised some comment. Following the recently completed new web-site / rebranding project which saw a refresh of the logo / crest an option might be to simply turn the logo / crest into a town flag.

After discussion it was agreed that a competition would be held to design a Town Flag. The competition would be open to all and the design should incorporate in some way the logo / crest. The Town Council would retain the right to approve the final design of the Town Flag which may or may not incorporate some or all of the winning design.

RESOLVED that:

- i) A competition is held to design a Town Flag.***
- ii) The Town Council reserved the right to approve the final design of the Town Flag which may or may not include all or some of the winning competition entry.***

12 Flag Flying

Several amendments had been made to the Flag Flying Policy including the addition of the new flag pole at the Memorial Gardens. The list of dates when the Union Flag would be flown on the flag pole outside the Town Hall remained the same as before, following the dates designated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. With the exception of Commonwealth Day when the Commonwealth Flag would be flown instead of the Union Flag and Europe Day when the Europe Flag would be flown. If adopted the Town Flag would be the default flag flown when there was no other requirement.

As previously ad hoc requests to fly flags not covered by the policy would be determined by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor. This allowed for example the relevant flag to be flown as a welcome to overseas visitors. The French Flag was flown during the French market last weekend and had been very well received by both the French market stallholders and visitors to the market.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Flag Flying Policy be adopted.***

13 World Village Market

The Italian and French markets have been well received. The French market used to visit twice a year but has now changed to an annual visit in October leaving a gap in the April event calendar. It is proposed that a World Village Market, consisting of up to 20 stalls located around the Town Hall be held over a three day period in Spring. The latest suggested dates being 21-23 April 2016.

RESOLVED that:

- i) A three day World Village Market be held in 2017.***

14 Continental Markets

It was proposed to hold an Italian Market over a two day period on 3-4 March 2017 and a French Market over a three day period on 19-21 October 2017.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Two continental markets be held in 2017.*

15 Music in the Park

A request had been received from the Music in the Park Committee (MiTP) to approve the closure of Elms Park on Sunday 30 April 2017 in order for the MiTP event to take place and to request support with the 2017 event by the Maintenance Team as had been provided at previous MiTP events.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Elms Park be closed to the public between the hours of 10am and 10pm on Sunday 30 April 2017.*
- ii) Event support for Music in the Park 2017 and associated expenditure of up to £120 be approved.*

16 Thame Carnival

A request had been received from the main organiser of the Carnival for support with the 2017 event as had been provided in previous years.

Recommended that:

- i) The Carnival for 2017 is supported and that the associated salary expenditure of up to £350 be released from Revenue Funds.*

17 Christmas Event

Members noted the update on the plans for the Christmas Lights Switch-on Event to be held on Friday 2 December 2016 and the request that Councillors provide assistance in staffing the attractions and operating the road closure.

Councillors who assisted with the event in 2015 remarked that it had been very successful and that they had enjoyed taking part.

18 Open Spaces Working Group / Elms Park Improvements

Members noted the report.

19 Priest End Allotments to Burial Space

Members noted the report. The transfer of the land was progressing. An advertisement had been placed in the Thame Gazette giving notice that the Town Council intended to dispose of the land by transfer to the Diocese of Oxford. A notice was also posted on the Town Council's website. No objections had been received.

20 Cricket Club Clubhouse Redevelopment

Members noted the report. Cllr Champken-Woods reported that official confirmation had been received from SODC that grant funding of £250,000 towards the redevelopment project had been approved.

21 Thame Fairs 2016

Members noted the report and the request that a working group, made up of three Councillors from this Committee, review the Fair Agreement in time for negotiations to commence in January 2017.

Cllrs Champken-Woods, Stiles and Wyse all agreed to be members of the working group to review the Agreement.

22 Thame Shed

Members noted that following a successful open meeting in Thame Town Hall supported by an enthusiastic group of would be 'shedders', a Steering Group had been formed and met to plan the way forward and make Thame Shed a reality, a place where men and women can engage in practical activity, creating, making, mending, refurbishing and sharing their skills in the companionship of others. Thanks was extended to Mr Adrian Dite for agreeing to Chair the Steering Group.

23 Drainage / Central Footpath Work – Upper High Street

Members noted that the proposed work to replace the central footpath on the Upper High Street as noted at the last meeting commenced on 14 October 2016 – with a delay due to the contractors being delayed on site elsewhere. This had been a complex project with many implications to be managed. Updates had been provided by e-mail on 20 September 2016 and 11 October 2016. The work would now also include the re-establishment of the asphalt patches at the car park kerb face that are proud and causing the surface water to pond at the interface of the patch and existing surface. This would permit the reshaping of the surface area in front of the car park kerb face to ensure any surface water was encouraged to flow to and through the drainage units under the footway to discharge in the channel in the High Street. It was anticipated that the work will be completed within three weeks dependent on any unforeseen circumstances.

24 Armistice Day & Remembrance Service

Members noted the following dates – Armistice Day, Friday 11 November 2016, 10.55am assemble outside the Town Hall for the Act of Remembrance, led by the Town Mayor. Remembrance Service, Sunday 13 November 2016, 10.30am assemble in car park at Town Hall ready to process to the Memorial Gardens. Cllr Stiles gave her apologies for both dates.

25 Town Awards

It was noted that the presentation of the Town Awards would take place on 4 May 2017 at The Thame Barns Centre.

26 Charity Fair

In order to ensure continuity, it was noted that Cllrs Emery, Dixon and Midwinter had taken on responsibility this year, on behalf of the Town Council, for the organisation of the annual Charity Fair that used to be run by ex-Councillors Beatrice Dobie and David Laver. Minimal officer support was required and would be provided to help ensure success. Following this year's event on 5 November 2016 it was expected that the three Councillors would make recommendations for longer term ownership.

A Vote of Thanks was given to the three Councillors for taking on the responsibility of organising the Charity Fair for this year.

27 Kimblewick Hunt

Following the successful meeting back in the town centre last year, it was noted that the Kimblewick Hunt would once again commence their Meet in the Upper High Street car park on Monday 2 January 2017.

28 Maintenance Report

The report was noted. Cllr Fickling expressed thanks on behalf of the residents in Moreton for the quick response in mending the Noticeboard. The Asset Manager reported that the new LED floodlights in the Memorial Gardens would be installed by 10 November. An Apprentice Maintenance Assistant had been appointed and would commence work on Monday 7 November 2017. Part of the apprenticeship will include attending Berkshire Agricultural College from January 2017. The growth of vegetation along the public footpaths at Priest End had been reported to the Highways Department.

29 Music in the Park / Friends of Elms Park

Members noted the letter received from the Chairman of Friends of Elms Park and agreed that the money raised by the Friends of Elms Park, and currently held by the Town Council, be ring-fenced to be spent on facilities within the park.

The meeting concluded at 8.05pm

Signed
Chairman, 24 January 2017