

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee held on 24 October 2017 at 6.30pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs N Champken-Woods, P Cowell, M Deacock, N Dixon (Chairman), M Dyer, L Emery (Deputy Mayor), C Jones, P Lambert and M Stiles (Deputy Chairman)

Officers

G Hunt, Town Clerk

L Fuller, Community Project Support Officer

J Howells, Asset Manager

C Pinnells, Community Services Manager

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs Butler (Unwell) and Wyse (Holiday).

2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr Dixon declared an interest in Chinnor Rugby Club as she is now employed by them, and stepped down as a Town Council representative (agenda item 6g).

3 Public Participation and Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Committee.
There were no questions put to the Committee.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 Budget Summary

Members received the budget summary up to 30 September 2017. A full set of the accounts were available for Members to view at the meeting.

6 Reports from Representatives on External Organisations

- a) Cuttle Brook Management Committee – Report noted. Cllr Jones noted some further sittings.
- b) Thame Carnival Committee – Report noted. Cllr Emery added that next year's date has been confirmed as Saturday 9 June 2018.
- c) Thame Football Partnership – Report noted.
- d) Twinning Association – Cllr Emery added that John Hampden School was looking at twinning with a school in Montesson, with the possibility of an exchange.
- e) Thame Good Neighbour Scheme – nothing reported.
- f) Thame Town Cricket Club – agenda item 7.

- g) Chinnor RFC – It was reported that all is fine.
- h) Music in the Park – Report noted, and desire to extend the use of the stage was highlighted.
- i) Sinaia Friendship Association – The sold-out talk by Dan Manea as part of this year’s Thame Arts & Literature Festival went well and was very interesting.
- j) Thame Museum Trust – It was additionally noted that there had been a marked increase in footfall during the Thame Arts & Literature Festival, due to the new Art Crawl.
- k) Thame Remembers – Report noted.
- l) Towersey Festival – Report noted.
- m) Thame Town Music Festival – agenda item 12.
- n) Thame Shed – Report noted. Cllr Dixon had attended the site meeting and was pleased with how things were progressing.

7 Cricket Club Clubhouse Redevelopment

The report was noted. The Town Clerk summarised the report and the funding proposals defined in paragraphs 20 and 21 of the report. The Town Clerk added that Angus Lachlan and Alistair Thomas, from the Cricket Club, were available to answer any questions.

Members raised concerns regarding the option of abandoning the project, as a large amount of time and money had already been invested which would be lost if the project was abandoned at this stage.

Members questioned whether there was a guarantee that the money, if provided by the Town Council, would stop further fundraising. Angus Lachlan stated that they were increasing their scope of funding options.

The reasons for the increase in the project cost were discussed, and there were concerns raised by Members that the cost may continue to rise. The Town Clerk explained that the aim is to tie the price down with the chosen contractor. Any overspend would be met through the contingency fund and the contractor.

RECOMMENDS that Council:

- i) continues to support the Cricket Clubhouse Redevelopment by adopting the additional funding proposals outlined in paragraph 20 of the report.***

8 Town Fairs

The report was noted. The Town Council’s externally employed Fair Co-Ordinator, Bob Taylor, had informed the Town Clerk that the October Fair had gone well, with the Showmen very pleased and there had been an increase in attendance. Discussions were now underway for the next 3 years.

Members discussed the comments which had been made on social media following the cancellation of the September Fair. Many of the comments had been misdirected to the Town

Council as a result of the Showmen's Guild misinforming their members. Cllr Dyer added that the Showmen's Guild had apologised for their comments, but no apologies had been received from members of the community.

Discussions then turned to the possibility of combining the September Fair and October Charter Fair, as the cancellation of this year's September Fair gave the Council a clean slate to negotiate from. Some Members supported this idea, adding that the October Charter Fair was usually quieter so combining them may allow the Charter Fair to be as popular as the September Fair. Other Members were concerned that this would be a tradition lost for the Town and that the two fairs attracted different people and were separately managed.

Cllr Lambert added that the timing of the original press release (5pm on Friday evening) was not ideal, as there were no Council representatives to respond to any queries until the Monday morning and this possibly exacerbated the social media comments.

9 Themed Markets

Members supported the continuation of holding the French Market and World Village Market next year.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Council approve holding two Themed Markets in 2018.***

10 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 6 May 2018 in order for the MiTP event to take place and to request support with the 2018 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 6 May 2018 for the Music in the Park event***
- ii) The Town Council provide event support for Music in the Park 2018 and associated expenditure of up to £80.***

11 Thame Carnival

A request had been received from the main organiser of the Carnival for support with the 2018 event as had been provided in previous years.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Carnival for 2018 is supported and that the associated salary expenditure of up to £350 be released from General Reserves.***

12 Thame Town Music Festival

It was noted that following the success of this year's summer event, event organiser Johnnie Littler was seeking funding for a future Thame Town Music Festival. Members were shown a short summary video produced after the event.

An email, received earlier in the day of the meeting, had been circulated to all Members from Johnnie Littler with the key feedback points of the event. The event successfully delivered according to plan and budget, and achieved its stated objectives. The event had received very

strong social media feedback, as well as positive feedback from the police and artists. There had been only a few minor medical incidents and complaints, and no security incidents or complaints from residents / retailers. However, no feedback had been received from the retailers and there were still some outstanding financial issues. Therefore, Johnnie is not able to commit to an event for 2018 as financing and ability to cover workload have not yet been confirmed.

Members agreed that they would support a future event.

13 Priest End Allotments to Burial Space

The report was noted. The Town Clerk added that the transfer documents arrived on 23 October 2017 and it was proposed that two Councillors sign and seal the documents after the meeting.

Cllr Champken-Woods encouraged all Members to attend the consecration. [Now provisionally scheduled for 14 December 2017].

14 Open Spaces Working Group

The report was noted. The Open Spaces Working Group had selected 7 ideas from the original 24 ideas presented at the previous Community, Leisure & Recreation meeting on 25 July 2017.

The public consultation for the proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) opened on the day of the meeting (24 October 2017). The Town Clerk asked all Members to respond to the consultation, and added that the Council was concerned that there was a lower age limit (18 years) on the PSPO and on the ability to issue fines / notices. The Town Clerk explained that the legislation was new and therefore there was limited evidence available of PSPO effectiveness elsewhere.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk would additionally respond on behalf of the Town Council.

15 Christmas Event

The report was noted. This year's Christmas Lights Switch-On event will take place on Friday 1 December 2017. Members were encouraged to sign up to help at the event, to assist with the variety of operational event requirements.

16 Service of Remembrance

It was noted that this year's Service of Remembrance would take place on Sunday 12 November 2017. As Armistice Day falls on a Saturday this year, the Town Council will leave the community to observe the two minutes silence at 11am as it feels appropriate.

17 Town Awards

It was noted that this year's Town Awards will take place on Thursday 3 May 2018 at Thame Barns Centre.

Cllr Dixon noted that John Thomas, previous manager of the Barns Centre, had recently passed away and there would be public memorial service on Wednesday 25 October 2017.

18 Charity Fair

It was noted that Cllrs Emery, Dixon and Midwinter have continued with the responsibility of the Thame Town Charity Fair, which will take place on Saturday 4 November 2017. Cllr Emery asked Members to come and show their support for the event and the town's charities.

19 Farmers Market

It was noted that the Town Council continues to support the Farmers' Market in a variety of ways, including with social media and publicity.

20 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 1 January 2018.

21 Maintenance Report

The Asset Manager presented the comprehensive report of the Maintenance Team's activities. The Asset Manager had recently joined the Maintenance Team at the Memorial Gardens to plant the winter plants and had received a phenomenal number of compliments from residents and visitors who had been passing by.

Cllr Dixon asked whether there was an update on the bench which had been damaged at Elms Park. The Community Services Manager reported that the bench had been fixed and it was hoped that the Maintenance Team would collect it shortly.

Cllr Emery asked whether the bench that had been removed at Southern Road Recreation Ground was going to be replaced. The Asset Manager explained that the bench had been vandalised and there were no plans to replace it, however a memorial bench for Megan Biddle was being planned to be installed at SRRG.

The Asset Manager added that all play areas in Thame were being inspected on 25 October 2017 by RoSPA.

Cllr Dixon raised concerns over the groups which gather at SRRG and questioned how best to report this. The Town Clerk advised to call 999 if a crime is currently being committed. The online reporting tool on Thames Valley Police's website is also a good way to report a crime, and sometimes more effective than calling 101. The Town Clerk added that solutions at SRRG were being progressed, including an interim lighting solution and the PSPO. Both the Town Council and Police are aware of the concerns at SRRG.

The report was noted.

Cllr Emery left the meeting during this item.

The meeting concluded at 7:35pm

Signed
Chairman, 6 February 2018