

## THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee held on 13 March 2018 at 7.15pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

**Present:** Cllrs B Austin (Chairman), D Bretherton (Deputy Chairman), D Dodds, M Dyer, L Emery (Deputy Mayor), H Fickling, P Lambert, A Midwinter and T Wyse (Town Mayor)

**Officers**

G Hunt, Town Clerk  
G Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer  
A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Cowell (Business) and Stiles (Holiday).

### 2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 Public Participation & Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Committee.

There were no public questions put to the Committee.

### 4 Thame Swimming Club

Dr Phil Evans and Rachel Humphreys gave a presentation on behalf of Thame Swimming Club (TSC). The purpose of the presentation was to introduce the Club, outline the challenges faced by the Club and the pool operators, to re-align the TSC development plan and the Sports Facility Strategy for Thame and support the Town Council with revision of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan.

TSC was formed in 2009 and is based at Thame Leisure Centre. It is an extremely competitive swimming club but at the same time all inclusive, welcoming members whatever their ability and focusing on their development whilst keeping it fun. Typically TSC has around 130 registered members aged from 7 to 18 years.

TSC is a non-profit making club run by volunteers, the money raised through membership and fundraising being spent on pool time and supporting swimmers. The club also used pools at Princes Risborough, Berinsfield, Headington Girls School and Wallingford outdoor pool in the summer. The majority of members lived in Thame, with others coming from Long Crendon, Chinnor, Haddenham, the catchment area extended as far as Aylesbury.

Last year 24 swimmers took part in the County Championships entering several events. TSC had its first member compete at the Irish National Championships and another enter the open water meet, the Henley Classic.

Phil Evans thanked the Town Council for the grant funding received a couple of years ago which had enabled the club to purchase a starting system for galas and other pieces of equipment. The club was involved in the community supporting the Carnival, the Rotary Club Swimathon and the Round Table Santa Sleigh. Particular attention was drawn to the Para-Swimming Event on 24 March 2018.

Some current limitations the club faced was the access to pool time which limited future growth, TSC used 10% of the total time available, the five lane capacity which limited 8 swimmers per lane and the Swim School run by GLL which was at maximum capacity. The increasing demand on the whole facility raised the question as to whether it was fit for purpose to meet the demands of the town.

There was no joint approach to swimming between the various stakeholders or a co-ordinated strategy for swimming which resulted in talented swimmers being lost to the sport. The assumption that no additional pool time was needed in the Sports Facility Strategy was incorrect.

Phil Evans said the vision was to develop aquatics in Thame and the surrounding area to ensure the next generation of swimmers were able to compete at the highest level.

After answering a number of questions Cllr Austin thanked Phil and Rachel for their informative presentation.

## **5 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **6 Working Groups**

To **receive** a verbal update from the chairmen of:

- a) NPCC Co-Ordination Working Group – nothing further to report.
- b) The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Working Group

Cllr Bretherton had nothing further to report. The Town Clerk reported that he had shared the latest s106 report with Cllr Bretherton and other Officers. The Asset Manager had completed the applications to pull down £79,828 of s106 monies related to the redevelopment of the Cricket Club pavilion.

A meeting of the IDPWG was scheduled for 4 April 2018 at which the Capital Projects List would be reviewed and updated as well as discussions regarding the monitoring, reporting and how to spend the 25% CIL.

The NPCO reported that the Thame Tennis & Bowls club had been awarded £250k grant funding from SODC for the redevelopment of their clubhouse. The installation of the lighting solution in Southern Road Recreation car park had commenced yesterday.

- c) The Green Living Plan Working Group

Cllr Fickling reported that she attended the District sustainability meetings where there was a lot of energy going into neighbourhood plans. The Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer (NPCO) reported that the presentation of the draft Green Living Plan had been set for Tuesday 19 June 2018.

- d) The Town Centre Working Group

The Market Town Co-Ordinator's report was noted. Cllr Fickling added that the results of the customer survey had proved very useful. Cllr Fickling had attended the Historic High Street Seminar and it was clear that Thame was streets ahead of other towns in addressing the needs of the high street, not just from a retail point of view but the whole town.

- e) Transport Plan Working Group

The NPCO reported that the Town Council continued to receive representations from the public regarding the lack of enforcement on illegal parking in the town centre, including double yellow line parking. In each case the person registering the concern was advised to contact the police and to attend the 'Have Your Say' meetings held by the police in the Co-op to voice their concerns.

A request seeking clarification of the position of the new 280 and X80 bus stops had been made. Requests had also been received to consider 20mph speed limit areas and this would be added to the TPWG list of projects to consider. In the meantime the Town Clerk was looking into the cost of a portable vehicle activated sign advising motorists of their speed.

The Town Clerk had also been working with local cyclists encouraging them to get involved with the Thame to Haddenham cycle path providing them with background information and who to contact.

f) Community Facilities Working Group

The Town Clerk had used the opportunity of the Annual Town Meeting to send an update to the whole of the CFWG and also members of the TPWG. The Town Clerk reported that further analysis of the data used by LEAP needed to be completed before the next steps could be defined. SODC had responded to the request to meet to discuss next steps with regard to the Cattle Market Site saying they had no capacity to progress at the moment.

g) Burial Space Working Group

The Town Clerk reported that Jon Allen of CEG had contacted him to find out what the Town Clerk knew regarding the current status of the Burial Site on site C. Jon Allen was frustrated with the lack of progress by the companies employed by CEG to progress the planning application. The Town Clerk had passed all the information to Jon Allen that he had given to the previous companies and implored him to get a company such as Cemetery Development Services Ltd involved who could best define how a burial space should be set up.

## **7 Thame Neighbourhood Plan Revision**

Members noted that plans to kick-off the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan at the Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday 27 March 2018 were progressing. Presentation content had been drafted; precise workshop format had been proposed; facilitator notes are being drafted and facilitator volunteers sought; a Press Release has been issued; a publicity plan has been discussed; initial Town Council publicity has been executed via meeting minutes / newsletter / twitter / email.

Cllr Austin stated that it was important to remember the basic principles and vision statement, on which the Thame Neighbourhood Plan was based, continued to carry weight and any changes should be addressed openly and transparently.

For the benefit of the meeting Cllr Austin then stated the six basic principles in detail. Cllr Dyer suggested that a seventh principle be adopted in respect of the need for employment space.

The NPCO would be meeting with representatives from the Moreton Residents Association in order to identify the needs and concerns of the wider village.

Oxford Brookes University had been positive about an initial idea of offering a placement / part-time internship to a post-graduate student to assist with the rewrite of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## **8 South Oxfordshire District Local Plan**

It was noted that various further updates had been received from South Oxfordshire District Council on the next steps for the SODC Local Plan, all had been shared with Councillors.

The NPCO reported that things were moving fast and a decision regarding the Local Plan would be made at the Council Cabinet meeting of SODC on 20 March 2018. It would appear the Cabinet had three choices; to submit the Local Plan unchanged, remove the strategic site at Chalgrove and replace it with another or retain the Chalgrove site and add a reserve strategic site. The third option

was thought more likely if the District wished to work within current NPPF guidelines and submit the Local Plan to the Inspector by December 2018.

## **9 P17/S1069/FUL & P17/S1670/LB - The Elms, 32 Upper High Street**

It was noted that South Oxfordshire District Council had refused planning permission for planning applications P17/S1069/FUL and P17/S1670/LB for the erection of an Extra Care housing development (Use Class C2). The Town Council had recommended refusal on both the applications when they were discussed at the Council meetings on 9 May 2017 and 20 June 2017 respectively.

## **10 Affordable Housing / Community Land Trust**

Cllr Austin reported that membership of the National Community Land Trust had been attained. A number of people, with a wide range of disciplines had volunteered to be involved with the CLT working group and the first meeting had taken on 1 March 2018.

Cllr Austin had applied to the National CLT network for technical assistance to help form the Thame CLT and hoped to hear within a couple of weeks as to whether the application had been successful. The next steps for the working group were to agree the legal formation, identify suitable land and organise a housing needed analysis.

## **11 Site Allocation Discussions**

Following the lifting of the moratorium it was noted that:

- a) A meeting with Stofords to discuss options on the Cotmore Wells / Howland Road site took place on 27 February 2018. Stofords were sympathetic to the need to identify future employment need through the revision of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- b) A meeting with Angle Property regarding the Kingsmead Business Park took place on 5 March 2018. Angle Property presented plans for a care home on part of the site. The Town Council repeated its position that the site should remain wholly for employment use.
- c) A meeting with Hunter Page regarding development at Moreton is scheduled to take place on 19 March 2018.
- d) Park Meadow Farm House – the Town Clerk reported that the implications of this proposal were being considered and a meeting arranged to ensure the developer understood the Council's position.

## **12 Neighbourhood Plan Support**

Given Thame's reputation for Neighbourhood Planning, and its ever increasing experience in life beyond the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan, Members noted that:

- a) The presentation to Masters of Planning students at Oxford Brookes University on 6 March 2018 was well received – and had given the opportunity for a fundamental review of the Smörgåsbord.
- b) Cllr Dyer made time for an interview to assist a Brookes University undergraduate on their dissertation.
- c) Advice on post adoption work / process was provided to Watlington.
- d) Henley Town Council had tried to encourage SODC to change the wording of the letter sent to adjacent neighbours when a planning application is submitted. Parish Councils worked in different ways, there was confusion as some residents expected the Parish / Town Council to be

the deciding body not the District and when people sent a letter to the District regarding a planning application they expected the Parish / Town Councils to be aware of it.

Discussion had taken place with the Chair of the Henley Planning Committee but it was agreed that not a lot could be done at the moment.

### **13 Other Items to Note**

- a) A meeting with representatives of Lord Williams's took place on 8 February to review the latest progress towards a single site.
- b) South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have adopted the new Joint Housing Delivery Strategy, following a consultation which we put considerable effort into. Unfortunately our (and presumably everyone else's) comments were ignored, as it appears that the outcome of the consultation was simply to remove the word Draft from the document and consolidate a hyperlink.
- c) Further correspondence has been received on the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway – from CPRE and our Oxfordshire County Councillor. The Town Council's position remains as "Wait and See".
- d) We are aware of continued discussions on the Health Hub between Hallam Land representatives and the Thames surgeries.
- e) Impacts of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal are being monitored by the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer.
- f) The central Government consultation on revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework was launched on 5 March 2018. The Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer is reviewing the detail to establish the implications on our Neighbourhood Planning and establish relevant next steps.
- g) The Appeal by Churchill Retirement Living Ltd on the Thames Valley Police site that was due to commence on 13 March 2018 has been postponed by the Planning Inspectorate.

The meeting concluded at 8.26pm

Signed .....  
Chairman, 22 May 2018