

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Thame Town Council held on 8 May 2018 at 6.30pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

Present: Cllrs B Austin, D Bretherton, D Butler, M Deacock, M Dyer, L Emery (Deputy Mayor), H Fickling, C Jones, P Lambert, A Midwinter, M Stiles and T Wyse (Town Mayor).

Officers

G Hunt, Town Clerk

G Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

A **Outgoing Mayor Announcements**

Cllr Wyse declared he had enjoyed his year as Town Mayor. He then asked representatives of his chosen charities, the Red Kite Family Centre and Thame Day Centre to come forward to receive a cheque each for £5874.00.

1 **Election of Town Mayor**

Town Mayor, Cllr Wyse called for nominations for the position of Town Mayor. It was moved and duly seconded that Cllr Midwinter be elected as Town Mayor.

RESOLVED that:

- i) ***Cllr Midwinter be elected Town Mayor for the ensuing year.***

2 **Declaration of Acceptance of Office by Town Mayor**

Cllr Midwinter signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Town Mayor and thanked fellow Councillors for electing her. Cllr Midwinter took the chair. Her first duty was to present a gift to the outgoing Town Mayor and a Past Mayor Badge.

3 **Election of Deputy Mayor**

Town Mayor Cllr Midwinter called for nominations for the position of Deputy Town Mayor. It was moved and duly seconded that Cllr Emery be elected as Deputy Town Mayor:

RESOLVED that:

- i) ***Cllr Emery be elected Deputy Town Mayor for the ensuing year.***

4 **Declaration of Acceptance of Office by Deputy Mayor**

Cllr Emery signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Deputy Town Mayor.

Rev Alan Garratt then said a prayer of thanks and blessed the Council, Officers, local charities and the people of Thame for the year ahead.

5 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Champken-Woods (SODC), Cowell (Business), Dixon (Business) and Dodds (SODC).

6 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr Deacock declared an interest in item 8 on the agenda as a resident who lived close to the application site. Cllr Deacock did not take part in discussions or vote on this item.

7 Public Participation and Public Questions

Mr Ledwidge of Montagu Evans spoke on behalf of Angle Properties the owners of the DAF Trucks site. The planning application proposed a 68 bed care home on the existing surface car park providing much needed care facilities and employment.

The final proposal was a result of pre-application discussions with the District Council, a meeting with the Town Council and a public consultation exercise. The developer appreciated the proposal may not be universally popular, particularly with the views expressed by the Town Council related to the loss of employment land.

The justification for the proposal was set out in the planning application documents, the Prior Approval for residential conversion of the office building and associated land had established a residential use of the site. The care home would generate a number of permanent employment opportunities, approximately 70, across a range of skills and provide new bed spaces identified through Care UK Homes own analysis.

Detailed plans and elevations showed how the site would be laid out. The two storey development would be set well back from the road and a number of the existing trees retained.

Angle Properties appreciated the concerns raised but hoped the justification for the scheme was clear.

Cllr Deacock entered the meeting during this item.

8 P18/S1243/FUL – DAF Trucks Ltd, Eastern Bypass

Cllr Dyer opened the discussion stating he was appalled that the Council was even being asked to consider this application. Thame had lost a considerable amount of existing employment land through Permitted Development. The applicant knew when they purchased the site it was protected for employment use under the Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) and were told again at their meeting with the Town Council but had gone ahead and submitted the application with no respect to the community's views and no intention of observing the TNP which was unacceptable.

The DAF building was totally unsuitable for conversion to residential use and having gained permitted development rights for the conversion the developer was now stretching development on the site to the car park. There was a suspicion that the District Council's Planning Department, instead of defending the TNP was being seduced into considering residential development across the whole of the site.

The applicant had stated that no interest had been shown in the site for employment use following marketing. Whilst the Town Council accepted the buildings might not attract a great deal of interest it was the site that was protected and could be redeveloped for employment use. The agent for an employment site just outside the parish had already received enough interest from companies to be able to fill his site twice over. The Town Council therefore did not accept the suggestion that the employment land at the DAF site was now redundant.

The Transport Assessment referred to the nearest convenience store being a 15 minute walk from the proposed development. It was considered this would need to be a brisk walk to manage the 1.2km distance in this time. The Assessment also referred to multiple bus services of which there was only one that regularly served the bus stop and to get into the town visitors, staff and occupants of the proposed care home would have to cross a busy road.

Other impacts on health, safety and emergency services had not been addressed, the Clinical Commissioning Group had recommended against this application and there was no evidence of any need for a care home in Thame.

Concern was raised with regard to parking on the site and that the need had been grossly underestimated. The location of the care home in the middle of an industrial area was not good for the well-being and amenity of future occupiers. No regard had been given to the points the Town Council raised at the meeting with the developer relating to the design, the size of the rooms and the aspect.

The pre-application document published on the District Council's website proposed 98 dwellings, 63 flats and a 68 bed care home all of which represented a substantial intensification of the site. Over 300 care home spaces had been put forward without any justification of need.

RESOLVED that:

A recommendation of refusal in the strongest possible terms be submitted, given the conflict with the adopted Thame Neighbourhood Plan.

- 1. The application was seeking the loss of valuable employment land for which there was a significant, known demand.**
- 2. No evidence had been submitted of a local need for the proposed care home, supported by local Care Commissioning Groups.**
- 3. It was likely the facility, which would cater for those requiring the highest level of care, would serve to increase demand on stretched local health services.**
- 4. Such facilities should be planned for strategically, at a regional level, in order to locate them where the necessary supporting services are provided.**
- 5. The facility is poorly designed.**

9 Committees

The Committee Structure, Committee Responsibilities, Terms of Reference and Delegations were presented for approval. Minor changes had been made to the Committee Responsibilities, the Committee / Working Group Structure and Delegations documents as documented in the report.

The Town Clerk reported that there was no clear delegation of a limited spending delegation to the key Committees, CLR and P&R and proposed that each be given a clear spending delegation of up to £10,000 from existing reserves.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Committee Structure, Committee Responsibilities, Terms of Reference and Delegations be approved.***

10 Appointment of Standing Committees

RESOLVED that:

- i) Cllrs B Austin, D Bretherton, P Cowell, M Deacock, D Dodds, H Fickling, C Jones, M Stiles and T Wyse and be appointed to the Planning and Environment Committee.***
- ii) Cllrs D Butler, N Champken-Woods, P Cowell, N Dixon, M Dyer, C Jones, P Lambert, M Stiles and T Wyse be appointed to the Community, Leisure and Recreation Committee.***

- iii) ***Cllrs B Austin, D Bretherton, D Butler, N Champken-Woods, M Deacock, N Dixon, D Dodds, M Dyer, H Fickling and P Lambert be appointed to the Policy and Resources Committee.***
- iv) ***Cllrs B Austin, D Bretherton, P Cowell, D Dodds, M Dyer, H Fickling, C Jones, P Lambert, and M Stiles be appointed to the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee.***
- v) ***Cllrs L Emery (Deputy Mayor), A Midwinter (Town Mayor) and Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee, Community, Leisure and Recreation Committee, Planning and Environment Committee and Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee be appointed to the Personnel Committee.***

11 External Organisations

- a) Barns Centre – D Butler, D Dodds & Town Clerk
- b) Chinnor Rugby Football Club – D Bretherton
- c) Citizens' Advice – B Austin
- d) Cricket Club – N Champken-Woods
- e) Cuttle Brook Management Committee – C Jones
- f) Health Hub (including Community Hub Pilot) – N Champken-Woods
- g) Music in the Park – M Stiles
- h) National Association of Local Councils – Chair, Policy & Resources
- i) Red Kite Family Centre – L Emery & T Wyse
- j) Sinaia Friendship Association – D Bretherton
- k) Thame Carnival Committee – L Emery
- l) Thame Business Forum – Chair, Policy & Resources
- m) Thame & District Day Centre – A Midwinter
- n) Thame & District Housing Association – D Butler
- o) Thame Football Partnership – M Dyer
- p) Thame Good Neighbour Scheme – A Midwinter
- q) Thame Museum Trust – D Butler & L Emery
- r) Thame Town Music Festival – T Wyse
- s) Thame Remembers – D Bretherton & M Dyer
- t) Thame Shed – T Wyse
- u) Thame Sports Club – C Jones
- v) Thame Youth Memorial Trust – P Lambert
- w) Thame Youth Projects Group – H Fickling
- x) Towersey Festival – D Bretherton & P Lambert
- y) Transport Representative – M Stiles
- z) Twinning Association – D Butler
- aa) 21st Century Thame – L Emery & H Fickling
- bb) Welfare Trust – N Champken-Woods

RESOLVED that:

- i) ***The Members as listed above be appointed as representatives to the named External Organisations.***
- ii) ***Thame Youth Projects Group be added to the list of External Organisations and report to the Policy & Resources Committee.***
- iii) ***Thame Sports Club be added to the list of External Organisations and report to the Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee.***

Congratulations were expressed to Chinnor Rugby Football Club on their promotion.

12 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

It was a requirement that Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are reviewed annually. The Town Clerk had undertaken the review and proposed no changes to Standing Orders and one to Financial Regulations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Standing Orders and the revised Financial Regulations be adopted.*

13 Mayor's Report

Cllr Midwinter thanked Councillors for electing her as Town Mayor, stating it was a great honour. With a team of hard working, well trained officers and dedicated Councillors, the Council was well placed to overcome any challenges it might face in the coming year. Cllr Midwinter thanked Cllr Wyse and his wife for all their hard work over the last year as Mayor and Consort.

Cllr Midwinter's announced her chosen charities for the year as Sharing Life Trust and Thame Youth Projects. The Mayor's Cadet this year would be a Ranger Guide. Cllr Midwinter had chosen the Girl Guide Movement in memory of Mrs Julia Hussey who was involved with the Movement all her life and an example to everyone.

Lastly Cllr Midwinter thanked everyone who had been involved in Music in the Park this year, it had been a splendid event attended by over 4,500 people.

14 Members Questions (under Standing Order 11)

No questions were raised.

15 Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 April 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

16 Planning & Environment Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2018 were noted.

17 Green Living Plan / Council Meeting

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Town Council on 19 June 2018 is now scheduled to start at 8pm, preceded by a public presentation on the draft Green Living Plan, commencing at 7pm

The meeting concluded at 7.19pm

Signed
Chairman, 19 June 2018