

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Thame Town Council held on 19 June 2018 at 8pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

Present: Cllrs B Austin, D Dodds, H Fickling, P Lambert, A Midwinter (Town Mayor), M Stiles and T Wyse

Officers

G Hunt, Town Clerk
C Pinnells, Community Services Manager
M Robinson, Office Administration Manager
A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

0. Green Living Plan (GLP)

Cllr Fickling commended the RSA Thame Group and everyone who had contributed towards the draft Green Living Plan. A great deal of work, research and thought had gone into the draft Plan which was a terrific document.

Cllr Fickling looked forward to the RSA Thame Group's continued involvement and hoped the whole community would get involved and behind the Green Living Plan.

Cllr Stiles stated she was impressed with what the RSA had achieved. The idea the consultation should include schools and reach out to people not already involved in community groups as suggested at the GLP presentation earlier was a good one.

Cllr Austin raised a question regarding the prescriptive wording of the protection of green space between Thame and Moreton from future development. The Town Clerk said there would be some small refinements to the draft GLP before it went out to consultation and that the consultation was the right place to raise this type of question.

The Town Mayor gave a vote of thanks to the RSA Group for all they had done.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The current version of the Green Living Plan be approved as a basis for public consultation, intended to take place over the summer period.*

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Bretherton (Thame Remembers), Butler (Personal), Champken-Woods (Holiday), Cowell (Holiday), Deacock (Business), Dixon (Unwell), Dyer (Thame Remembers), Emery (Council Business) and Jones (Thame Remembers).

2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Civic Announcements

Cllr Midwinter had attended the OCVA Awards ceremony on 5 June 2018 at which the voluntary work of a Thame resident, Jean Mander, had been acknowledged. Jean received two awards, one for her voluntary work with the visually impaired and the other for over 40 years voluntary service.

This being Cllr Midwinter's first Full Council meeting she announced Miss Annabel Kemp and Miss Sophie Kemp, members of the 1st Thame Rangers and Young Leaders Unit as the Mayor's Cadets

for this year. Cllr Midwinter invited them to step forward to receive a presentation, with badges to follow.

4 Public Participation and Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Council.
There were no public questions put to the Council.

5 Report from County Councillor N Carter

County Councillor Carter had submitted the latest OCC newsletter earlier this evening which had been circulated to Members.

With reference to discussions earlier at the Green Living Plan presentation regarding the Thame to Haddenham cycle route, Cllr Carter stated the delay in progress was not as a result of the two County Councils not talking to each other, both authorities were keen for the project to progress. The problem was funding, there was a pot of £250,000 from s106 contributions allocated to the project but this would only cover a fraction of the overall cost. Cllr Carter would push for the County Council to undertake a business plan, to include costings, to better understand the current position.

With reference to traffic management in the town, the County Council were looking at different options, one being the restriction of HGVs in the town centre, however, the problem may be the enforcement of any restrictions imposed. Burford was currently piloting a similar scheme over a two month period and if successful it would be introduced in other towns in the County.

Cllr Carter reported the proposals for Unitary were being actively considered but had stalled slightly due to the change in the Government Minister at MHCLG.

6 Reports from South Oxfordshire District Councillors

District Councillor Matelot reported a Housing Allocations Policy Group had been set up to review the District's Affordable Housing Allocation Policy. Cllr Matelot together with representatives from Wallingford, Didcot and Henley were members of the group.

The Group was keen to engage with key stakeholders and had met with representatives of the Housing Associations. As well as reviewing policies consideration was being given to offering all affordable properties across both Districts, South Oxfordshire and the Vale, and the siting of new affordable housing either in groups, preferred by the Housing Associations or 'pepper potting' preferred by the District Council.

Residents in smaller villages had raised concerns about the loss of local affordable housing. Occupants were being moved out in order for the land to be redeveloped to provide larger market led housing with the profit then being used by the Housing Association to build affordable housing elsewhere.

Cllr Dodds reported that cooking oil could now be recycled by placing it in a plastic bottle within the food caddy. This enabled energy to be regained and also reduce the amount of oil and fats put down drains and blocking them.

The first draw of the District Lottery had taken place, it was hoped support for the Lottery would grow. All the money raised went to support local community groups.

7 Members Questions (under Standing Order 11)

No questions were raised.

8 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

9 Planning & Environment Committee

The minutes of the meetings held on 8 May 2018, 22 May 2018 and 12 June 2018 were noted.

10 Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2018 and 22 May 2018 were noted.

11 Internal Audit

The fourth and final visit by the Internal Auditor took place on 29 May 2018 as part of the agreed annual audit programme and the Final Update report had been received. Overall there were no matters for concern and the report confirmed that the Council operated a good system of internal control.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Internal Audit Report 2017-18 – Final Update be received.*

12 External Audit / Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) / End of Year Accounts 2017-18

The report provided the relevant background to the Financial Statement (unaudited) for the year ending 31 March 2018 and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), including the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for 2017-18.

On 30 November 2016 the Small Authorities Audit Authority (SAAA) announced the award of new External Auditor contracts for a period of five years with Moore Stephens being appointed for Oxfordshire. The contract being effective from 1 April 2017. The Town Council was now legally required to submit an AGAR instead of an Annual Return.

It is a requirement of Accounts and Audit Regulations for the Town Council to separately approve the Annual Governance Statement in advance of approving the Accounting Statements. To complete the Accounting Statements within the AGAR, the Financial Statement for the year ended 31 March 2018 had been prepared. The Town Clerk had reviewed the 2017-18 accounts in detail, against the budget and there were no particular variances of note, apart from the negative impact of the cancellation of the fair and the impact of the unbudgeted s278 payment for the Thame Football Partnership, both as previously reported.

There being no questions the following items were separately voted on and agreed.

Annual Governance Statement 2017-2018

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Annual Governance Statement for 2017-2018 be approved.*

Financial Statement (unaudited) for the year ending 31 March 2018

RESOLVED that:

- ii) The Financial Statement (unaudited) for the year ending 31 March 2018 be received.*

Accounting Statements for 2017-2018

RESOLVED that:

- iii) The Accounting Statements for 2017-2018 be approved.*

13 Mayor of Thame Charity Trust

Members noted the report, together with the schedule of monies received and paid out of the Charity Account for 2017-18 and the Income & Expenditure summary for the year.

14 Grants

The Grant Awards Panel had received 16 grant applications, 14 were reviewed and two applications withdrawn (one as the organisation was located outside the parish boundary and the other had received sufficient funding to complete the project).

RESOLVED that:

- i) The grant awards as recommended by the Grant Awards Panel be agreed in accordance with the powers identified in Appendix 1 of the report.*

15 Oxfordshire Armed Forces Community Covenant

Members noted that the Town Mayor will sign a pledge to support the Oxfordshire Armed Forces Community Covenant on behalf of Thame Town Council on Monday 25 June 2018. Thame Town Council first pledged to support the Covenant in 2011. The Covenant aims to encourage charities, local authorities, businesses, communities and individuals to work together with the military to offer support to service personnel and their families, as well as reservists and veterans.

16 Town Carnival

It was noted that the Town Council took part in the Carnival Parade on Saturday 9 June 2018; the Parade was spectacular and the Carnival was a great success. The Town Mayor thanked everyone who had taken part including the organisations and individuals who provided the costumes and props. Cllr Midwinter also thanked 21st Century Thame Group for all their hard work in organising such a fantastic event.

17 Town Centre Sports Event

It was noted that the Town Centre Sports Event will take place on the evening of Friday 29 June 2018. As before, the High Street Car Park will be closed from mid-afternoon on the day of the event. Cllr Midwinter encouraged everyone to come along and support the event.

18 Thame Town Music Festival

Members noted that the arrangements for the Town Music Festival on Friday 13 & Saturday 14 July 2018 are well advanced and a review of operational requirements will be undertaken shortly. Cllr Midwinter again encouraged everyone to come along and support the event.

The meeting concluded at 8.55pm

Signed
Chairman, 31 July 2018