

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee of Thame Town Council held on 22 January 2013 at 6.30pm In the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs D W Bretherton, N G Champken-Woods (Town Mayor), D W Dodds, M L Dyer (Chairman), H M Fickling, A Gunn (Vice Chairman), V F Humphries, Peter Lambert (Deputy Mayor), J Matelot Green and M Welply

Non Voting

Cllrs Laver and Stiles

Officers

Mrs H Stewart, Town Clerk

Mrs A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

Mrs C Pinnells, Community Services Manager

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Butler (holiday).

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Public Participation

Mr Palmer, representing the North Chiltern Rail Users Group addressed the Committee. Reference was made to correspondence sent to Chiltern Railways regarding the impact of the recent changes to timetabling and the effect that it had on passengers using the Haddenham and Thame Parkway Station. Chiltern Railways had transformed the service since taking over, however, it was felt the changes made in December were another step in what appeared to be a systematic downgrading of services to and from Haddenham and Thame.

4 Chiltern Railways

Mr Richard Harper, Head of Network Development, Chiltern Railways thanked the Council for the opportunity to address comments and correspondence received from local residents regarding timetable changes, departure and arrival times and overcrowding on particular trains.

Chiltern Railways operated 400 trains a day from 68 stations, carrying 14,000 commuters daily. Haddenham and Thame Parkway station was ranked 9th by the company in revenue terms and was an important station. In designing the new timetable 600 additional seats across the morning peak had been achieved and an extra carriage had been added to the 7.49am train to alleviate problems of overcrowding.

Mr Chad Collins, Head of Stations, Chiltern Railways outlined the improvements planned for next year at Haddenham and Thame Parkway. New ticketing machines would be installed and the station building size increased allowing the expansion of the café, waiting area and toilets. The capacity for cycle racks would be increased and there was a possibility a canopy would be added to the London bound platform in the next couple of years.

Mr Harper summed up by stating there was no question of the service being downgraded and the company would continue to invest and improve in the network and extend trains where practicable. Investment would also take place in the new route to Oxford which was due to open in 2015.

5 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of this Committee, held on 20 November 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 Budget/Finance Summary

Members received and noted the budget summary up to 30 November 2012. The full accounts were available at the meeting for Members to inspect.

7 Service Priorities

Members received and noted the progress made on the service priorities. With more reaching completion it was suggested a working group be set up to agree service priorities for 2013-14.

8 Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

- a) Citizens Advice Bureau – Cllr Lambert reported a meeting scheduled in December had been cancelled, nothing to report.
- b) Thame Museum Trust – Cllr Matelot Green to attend meeting tomorrow (23 January), nothing to report.
- c) Barns Centre – Cllr Matelot Green reported meeting scheduled for next week, nothing to report.
- d) 21st Century Thame – Cllr Gunn reported the Equipment Bank had been very successful loaning equipment to various local organisations. This in turn meant revenue coming back in enabling the maintenance of existing equipment and the ability to purchase new items for the pool. The New Year's Day walk had been a success with 40 people attending. The web portal project was nearing completion and it was hoped to launch in the near future. Alison Isherwood had been appointed as administrator for the loyalty card initiative.

9 Cricket Ground

The report of the annual inspection of facilities at the cricket ground was noted by Members. Attention was drawn to the encroachment along the ditch line. The council had taken legal advice and was pursuing the matter.

10 Cricket Club

Members were in agreement with the issuing of car parking licences on the proviso that the Council is kept informed when a new licence is issued.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Cricket Club may issue car parking licences in line with the terms of the lease and the Council is informed when a new licence is issued.***

11 Grant Awards Policy

The consideration to amend the current policy had come about as a result of the restructuring of the Thame Citizens Advice Bureau into a larger group incorporating Henley, Didcot and Abingdon. This would result in any funding being sent to central headquarters for redistribution. The CAB had become dependent on funding received from the Council and in order to continue an amendment to the grant policy would be required.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Grants Policy with the recommended amendments be adopted..***

12 Town Hall Refurbishment

Information on the Public Works Loan and the terms and conditions was provided to the Members.

RESOLVED:

- i) That a Public Works Loan be acquired for the refurbishment of the Town Hall windows.***

13 Thame and District Housing Association

Members felt the Thame and District Housing Association provided an important service to the town and the Council should retain its membership.

RESOLVED:

- i) That membership of the Housing Association be retained.***
- ii) That a request be made for a nominated Town council representative be able to join the Management Committee.***

The meeting concluded at 7.45pm

Signed
Chairman, 26 March 2013