

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Culture, Leisure & Recreation Committee held on 3 December 2013 at 6.30pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall.

Present: Cllrs N Champken-Woods, N Dixon (Chairman), M Dyer, A Gunn, P Lambert (Town Mayor), D Laver, J Matelot Green (Deputy Mayor) and M Stiles (Vice Chairman).

Non-Voting

V Humphries

Officers

H Stewart, Town Clerk

C Pinnells, Community Services Manager

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bretherton (Unwell), Dite (Family) and Emery (Holiday).

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Public Participation

There were no applications to address the Committee.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Stiles entered the meeting.

5 Budget Summary

Members noted the summary up to 30 October 2013 and raised no questions. A full set of the accounts were at the meeting.

6 Reports from Outside Bodies

- a) Cuttle Brook Management Committee - Cllr Stiles reported that the AGM had taken place in October. The main topic of conversation was the opening of the new bridge. Concern was raised regarding the increase in dog fouling and the disturbance of the wildlife in the Nature Reserve as a result of dogs being exercised off the lead. Cllr Laver reported that Radio Oxford had recently visited the Reserve which had resulted in some excellent publicity. Plans were being formulated for an exhibition in the Museum towards the end of 2014.

Cllr Laver entered the meeting during this item.

- b) Leisure Centre Management Committee – Cllr Stiles reported that the last management meeting was well attended. Richard Bolton had been appointed Centre Manager and there had been a noticeable improvement. The Festival of Christmas Music was due to take place on Wednesday 4 December 2013.
- c) Carnival Committee – Cllr Matelot Green reported that plans were well underway for next year’s event. Kubota had offered the use of three lorries for floats in the parade. The next committee meeting was scheduled for January 2014.
- d) Football Partnership – Cllr Dyer reported that the partnership continued to increase efficiency and was predicted to make a small surplus at the year end. Significant savings had been achieved by using volunteer staff on match days. Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC) status was being revisited now that certain criteria had been lifted which had precluded the Football Partnership from applying in the past. The next Stake Holder meeting was scheduled for 7 December 2013 at 7pm – Councillors were welcome to attend.
- e) Twinning Association – Cllr Humphries reported that a small group from the twinning association had recently returned from Montesson where they had a stall at the Christmas Market. A group from Montesson would attend the Thame Dickensian Christmas evening on 6 December 2013 followed by the twinning association’s Christmas celebration in the Upper Chamber.
- f) Cricket Club – The Clerk reported that a meeting had taken place with the redevelopment team who were looking to progress a planning application. Once this had been approved grant funding could be sought. The group intended to present their plans to the Council before the submission of the planning application to SODC.
- g) Chinnor RFC – Cllr Gunn Reported that the Club continued to do well. A planning application to develop the club house had been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council and the aim was to have the work completed in time for the Rugby World Cup being staged in the UK in 2015.

7 Community Events

The Council has helped facilitate community groups/individuals to organise events in the town. Members were being asked to consider the level of support the Council currently gave in terms of public liability insurance, staff hours, equipment and other help such as grant funding.

After some discussion the Council felt it was important to continue to support current community events but to work towards helping the working groups and committees gain the knowledge and confidence needed to become independent. The Council’s involvement would be phased out over an agreed number of years to allow for a smooth transition.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Option 3 presented in the report be approved as the approach to be taken in supporting community events.***
- ii) The Carnival and Music in The Park committees be assisted to achieve independence by the end of 2015.***

iii) Efforts be made to establish a management committee to take on the responsibility for organising the Christmas lights event.

8 Thame Fairs

The September and October Fairs had taken place with little incident due to the effective partnership of the Council, police, fire service and the security firm.

The agreement between the Town Council and The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain will expire on 31 January 2014 and it was proposed that a working group be set up to look at a new agreement. Consideration needed to be given to the positioning of Super Rides within the town, the cost of administering the fairs, the impact on the town and whether a 5yr or 10yr Agreement was appropriate.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Cllrs Champken-Woods, Dyer, Gunn and Stiles for a working group to discuss the future agreement with the Showman's Guild, making recommendations back to the Committee in April 2014.***

9 Elms Park

The installation of six lights along the footpath in Elms Park was progressing with a lead time of three months from the date the order is placed. It was anticipated that work would be completed by late March/early April 2014.

Seating in the Park would be determined after a trial of two seats being placed along the footpath and the monitoring of any issues that may arise from these location.

10 Ham Wood

The Woodland Trust had approached the Council with a request to consider taking on the lease of Ham Wood, located within the town boundary. The wood measured just over 2 hectares of which 40% was wooded with the remainder being rough grassland and scrub. It was a natural wood requiring little maintenance. It was agreed that further investigation take place into the conditions of the lease.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Consideration be given to the leasing of Ham Wood and the increase in the tree revenue budget of £350 required to cover the maintenance costs.***

11 Town Awards

Members were invited to review the categories for the 2014 Awards and put forward any suggestion for changes. It was agreed that this item would be brought back to the next meeting to allow time for consideration.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Terms of Reference for the Awards Panel be approved with the following amendment '4. Award Categories will be agreed by the Town Council'.***

12 Play Strategy Working Group

The presentation by the Play Strategy Working Group was deferred to the next meeting.

13 Cycle & Footpaths

The Council was approached by 21st Century Thame about projects that it could be involved with. The group was keen to progress ways to improve the signage on Lea Park and after discussing the project with the Town Clerk the parameters of the work were agreed including looking at existing signage that promotes Thame as a market town and ensuring a consistent approach. Consideration would also be given to new developments as listed in the Neighbourhood Plan and the signage required link the new and existing areas.

14 Centenary of First World War

In 2014 the centenary of the commencement of the First World War will be commemorated in different ways throughout the country. The Royal British Legion is promoting the sowing of Poppy Seeds and the Thame Branch were keen to identify areas around the town that would be suitable for the project. Members agreed that any form of commemoration should be in keeping with the solemnity of the event.

15 Christmas Event

Members noted the arrangements for the event.

16 Maintenance Report

The report was duly noted.

17 For Information

The SODC Arts, Sports and Leisure Participation consultation was noted.

The meeting concluded at 8.02pm

Signed
Chairman, 11 February 2014