

## THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Thame Town Council held on 13 November 2018 at 6.30pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

**Present:** Cllrs B Austin, D Bretherton, N Champken-Woods, P Cowell, D Dodds, M Dyer, H Fickling, C Jones, A Midwinter (Town Mayor) and T Wyse

**Officers**

G Hunt, Town Clerk

A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Butler (Holiday), Deacock (Business), Emery (Holiday), Lambert (Holiday) and Stiles (Unwell).

Cllr Dixon absent without apology.

### 2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 Civic Announcements

The Town Mayor, Cllr Midwinter extended her thanks to the Officers and members of the team for organising a superb Remembrance Service on Sunday morning. The Town Council had received many compliments, one letter especially stood out received from a retired RAF Squadron Leader, who was 90 years old, he said it was the best Remembrance Service he had ever attended.

The Beacon Lighting event in the evening was also very well attended and the entertainment, provided by Tay o' Lay following the serious period of reflection was appreciated. Anne Reid Hansen sang an excellent solo.

Cllr Midwinter extended her thanks to Thame Remembers, a project that ensured a Thame Cross was delivered to every grave and on the sea of the fallen from Thame. Also to the many volunteers who had delivered the crosses.

Finally Cllr Midwinter said she hadn't realised Thame Town Council had so much talent amongst its Members who had written, acted and sang in the production of the Ten Tommies from Thame. In particular Cllr Midwinter thanked Catherine Jones, Mike Dyer, David Bretherton and Peter Lambert.

The people of Thame had again been very generous in their support of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and the total will be announced on Monday 19 November 2018.

### 4 Public Participation and Public Questions

There were no applications to address the Council.

There were no public questions put to the Council.

### 5 Thames Valley Police

Sergeant Neil Anns thanked the Council for the opportunity to come and give an update on local policing in Thame. The last time he attended the Council in February it was his first day in this role.

He was pleased to report some positive news, crime figures were down with a year on year reduction of 20% in violent crime and a 41% reduction in anti-social behaviour. During the summer months there had been a targeted effort and as a result a number of offenders were arrested and charged.

Some have received custodial sentences and others restraining orders preventing them from visiting the town. To date the restraining order has not been breached.

The introduction of the Public Spaces Protection Order had helped and Sgt Anns had used the Order a couple of times. The use of the Direction to Leave is not recorded in any figures and so difficult to quantify how many times it has been used.

Burglary from dwellings was down, bucking the national trend and vehicle crime figures remained stable. A lot of work had been done to reinvigorate Shop Watch and there was a marked reduction in shop lifting.

The number of Officers in the Neighbourhood Policing Team had increased, there was now two PCs and seven PCSOs. The increase in numbers allowed the police to have a more visible presence and to deal more effectively with criminality.

Sgt Anns acknowledged an increase in Precept this year for police funding of £432m, this was seen as a huge positive with the money coming directly from the community. On a less positive note, recent information received suggested that the Government intends to change the way the counting and collecting of police pension funds takes place which, if agreed, will equate to a cut of £450m in police budgets. Considering 92% of police budgets goes on staffing this will have a huge impact.

Sgt Anns said the police were working the Thame Youth Projects Group and supported their ambitions for an outreach worker and to have a permanent home at Southern Recreation Ground. The police had also provided funding for the group.

After answering a number of questions Cllr Midwinter thanked Sgt Anns for his report.

Sgt Anns then provided an update on Parking Enforcement and announced a change in Sgt allocations from January 2019.

## **6 Thame Youth Projects Group**

Nick Francis, a member of Thame Youth Projects Group (TYPG) gave a presentation. TYPG was set up in 2012 to support young people in Thame following the cuts in County Council services. The group was now a registered charity and a member of Oxfordshire Youth and became an Accredited Youth Organisation in 2018.

TYPG is funded through grants, donations and local support. Currently the group run two Youth Cafes which are very successful and working well. Attendances are consistently growing and over 70 young people have attended Cafes over the last few weeks. TYPG has been the Town Mayor's chosen charity in 2016 and 2018 and receives good support from the community, schools and the police.

However, this was not enough and there was still lots more to do around increased engagement with young people. TYPG want to reach out and support more young people beyond the Cafes, provide access to services and facilities, develop outreach work and develop a plan for a permanent site for young people to meet. TYPG requested a partnership with the Town Council. The Town Council had already committed £15k of funding this financial year, a further £15k is in the draft budget for 2019-20 and TYPG asked that consideration is given for further funding to enable TYPG to employ an outreach worker on a three year contract.

Cllr Midwinter thanked Nick for his presentation and invited discussion from members for the TYPG's request for a third year of funding to enable an outreach worker to be recruited. Members commended the TYPG for their work to date and their ambitions for the future. It was felt that more detailed information was required before a commitment to fund a third year could be agreed.

**RESOLVED that:**

- i) The Town Council agrees in principle to award Thame Youth Projects Group £15k in the 2020-21 budget, representing a third year of funding at £15k pa to employ an outreach worker.*
- ii) A detailed proposal will be brought to a future meeting of the Council for consideration.*

**7 Report from County Councillor N Carter**

County Councillor Carter had provided the Town Clerk with a fourteen page report just before the meeting. The report was available in the drop box for Councillors to read.

Cllr Carter highlighted three items in the report. The preferred Corridor for the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway had been chosen. The next stage would be the decision on the preferred route within the Corridor, an announcement was expected next summer.

The County Council had entered into a long term partnership with Cherwell District Council. The arrangement will offer long term opportunities to join up services for residents, reduce costs and secure investment.

The County Council had responded to the consultation from Buckinghamshire County Council regarding household waste and recycling centres. It was likely that the site at Bledlow would close. The impact of travel distances from Thame to alternative sites at Redbridge and Oakley Wood in Oxfordshire is estimated to add just 10 minutes to a typical journey.

**8 Reports from South Oxfordshire District Councillors**

District Councillors Champken-Woods and Dodds had nothing further to add to the previously circulated SODC reports.

District Councillor Matelot asked if anyone was attending the District's Renewable Energy Workshop. The Town Clerk confirmed the Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer and members of the Thame RSA Group who were involved in the Green Living Plan for Thame had already registered to attend.

Cllr Matelot reported that with regard to the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, Highways England are holding two stakeholder meetings, one for County and District Councillors and one for Parish Councillors. Invites to both meetings will be sent to those whose parish falls within the preferred Corridor. The Town Clerk confirmed that Thame had not received an invitation.

**9 Members Questions (under Standing Order 11)**

No questions were raised.

Cllr Bretherton, a member of the Thame Remembers Project, presented the Town Council and Thame Museum each with a bound copy of the Thame Remembers Book.

**10 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2018 and 16 October 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**11 Policy & Resources Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2018 were noted.

**12 Community, Leisure & Recreation**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2018 were noted.

Item 9: Splash Pad Project Proposal

**RESOLVED that:**

- i) The Splash Pad Project proposal is supported and that further detailed funding proposals would be brought to a future meeting of the Council for consideration.*

**13 Planning & Environment Committee**

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 August 2018, 4 September 2018, 25 September 2018, 16 October 2018 and 6 November 2018 were noted.

**14 Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee**

The minutes of the meetings held on 14 August 2018, 25 September 2018 and 6 November 2018 were noted.

**15 Personnel Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2018 were noted.

**16 External Audit**

Members noted that the information submitted within Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2018 were in accordance with Proper Practices and there were no matters of concern.

**RESOLVED that:**

- i) The External Auditor's Report 2017-18 be received.*

**17 Schedule of Meetings**

**RESOLVED that:**

- i) The Schedule of Meetings for 2019-20 be approved.*

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm

Signed .....  
Chairman, 22 January 2019