

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Thame Town Council held on 16 April 2019 at 6.30pm in the Upper Chamber, Thame Town Hall

Present: Cllrs B Austin, D Bretherton, N Champken-Woods, P Cowell, M Deacock, N Dixon, D Dodds, M Dyer, L Emery (Deputy Mayor), H Fickling, C Jones, P Lambert, A Midwinter (Town Mayor), M Stiles and T Wyse.

Officers

G Hunt, Town Clerk
A Oughton, Committee Services Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

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

2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Civic Announcements

The civic attendances were noted.

The Town Mayor stated it was the last meeting of Full Council before the elections and a fitting time to say a fond farewell to four councillors who were not standing for re-election. All of them except one had been a Town Mayor.

Cllr Peter Lambert was Town Mayor in 2013 and Cllr Nichola Dixon in 2015. Cllr Midwinter thanked them both for all they had done for the town.

The third Councillor, Mary Stiles became a councillor in 1990 and during almost 30 years of service had held several roles and worked extremely hard. Cllr Stiles was never a Town Mayor but would have done an excellent job, instead she chose to concentrate her efforts in other ways to support the town and its residents.

Finally Councillor Don Butler became a councillor in 1990 and was Town Mayor four times, in 1992, 2000, 2001 and 2008. Cllr Butler worked hard for the town and in particular helping to strengthen relations with the twin town of Montesson. Cllr Midwinter thanked both Cllrs Stiles and Butler for all they had done whilst serving on the Town Council.

Cllr Midwinter wished all the candidates standing for election the best of luck.

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

Cllr Carter had given his apologies. His report, circulated in advance, was noted.

6 Reports from South Oxfordshire District Councillors

The Annual Report to Parish Councils was noted.

Cllr Champken-Woods added that following a question regarding Air Quality raised at the Annual Town Meeting he had contacted the Air Quality Officer at the District Council who had supplied the report circulated to Members earlier this afternoon. Over the last six years the figures showed a spike in 2017 which was probably linked to a climatic effect.

Cllr Champken-Woods will pursue the need for a monitoring site in the centre of the town.

Cllr Dodds reported the District Council are replacing two boilers at the swimming pool in Thame at a cost of £140,000. The swimming pool will remain open whilst the work is carried out.

The Town Mayor expressed her thanks to the three District Councillors who had represented the town over the last four years and wished all the candidates standing for election to the District Council the very best of luck.

7 Members Questions (under Standing Order 11)

Cllr Austin asked for an update on the steps the Town Council has taken to protect residents whose properties were adjacent to the Kingsey Road roundabout?

The Town Clerk replied that since the question was raised at the Full Council meeting on 26 February 2019 further discussions have taken place. The Town Council wrote to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and Thames Valley Police (TVP) following the accident in 2016 concentrating on prevention and some limited works were executed. The message received from OCC and TVP was that all six accidents were in some way or another related to driver error and nothing could have been done to prevent them from happening.

Further discussions have taken place on how best to protect residents, and the occupiers of the property most recently affected have in the past offered to contribute towards the cost of the installation of some sort of barrier. Representatives of East Thame Residents Association have had another site meeting last week with OCC. The Town Clerk will await the formal outcome of these discussions as to what could be done and the cost. Once the Town Clerk has this information appropriate further action will be taken.

Cllr Wyse raised a question related to the closure of the Waste & Recycling Centre at Bledlow. There had been a marked increase in fly tipping in the town of all sorts of items, including furniture. Is it time to re-introduce the provision of a skip in the Cattle Market?

The Town Clerk replied it is something the Town Council could investigate along with other potential solutions. Cllr Austin had raised the issue when the closure of the Bledow recycling centre was first announced. The Town Mayor had today received information on a campaign to re-open the recycling centre at Bledlow as a commercial concern and Buckinghamshire County Council have agreed to leave the site dormant for up to a year to allow a commercial initiative to be explored.

The recent increase in fly tipping had been noted and Biffa and SODC, in conjunction with OCC will be keeping a close eye on the situation. The Town Clerk agreed to contact the Waste Team at SODC to ask them to explore, with Thames Valley Police, whether CCTV could be used to cover the street area outside the various charity shops / recycling bins so that any reported incidents can be followed up and action taken against the culprits.

8 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

9 Policy & Resources Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2019 were noted.

10 Community, Leisure & Recreation

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2019 were noted.

11 Planning & Environment Committee

The minutes of the meetings held on 12 March 2019 and 2 April 2019 were noted.

12 Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2019 were noted.

13 Annual Town Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on 26 March 2019 were noted.

14 Bus Shelters

The Town Clerk presented the report on behalf of the Asset Manager.

OCC had received s106 funding towards bus shelters in the town and allocated approximately £43,000. Site visits and consultations with the bus route service providers and Councillors has identified sites for three new bus shelters; one on Oxford Road, Thame bound and two on Wenman Road (Warren Mead and Easington Drive) also Thame bound.

All new shelters will include a poster case to enable a town map / guide to be displayed, bench seats with handles and be suitable for DDA access. OCC has confirmed that any remaining funding, up to 50% of the £43k can be transferred to the Town Council for the purpose of future maintenance, improvements and installation of bus shelters.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The ownership and ongoing future maintenance of the three new bus shelters from Oxfordshire County Council be approved.*
- ii) The remaining s106 bus shelter funding from Oxfordshire County Council of £14,300 is transferred to the Town Council and earmarked for future maintenance, improvement, installation of bus shelters within Thame be approved.*

Following discussion of this item the Town Mayor took the opportunity to congratulate the Asset Manager, Janine Sparrowhawk on achieving the CiLCA qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration). The Town Council were very lucky to now have four members of staff with the CiLCA qualification.

15 The Elms, Upper High Street

Members noted that SODC had refused planning permission P18/S3596/FUL for the 'Housing with Care' development at The Elms.

16 Carnival

This year the Carnival theme is the Environment. Following on from the last three years' successful entries by the Town Council, the Community Services Manager called for Councillors and Staff to join in the fun and participate in the Town Council's float on Saturday 15 June.

Cllrs Deacock, Emery, Fickling, Jones and Midwinter volunteered to help on the day and Cllr Stiles volunteered to help with any preparation work needed in advance of the carnival.

17 Grants

It was noted that the Grants Award Process for 2019 had commenced on Monday 25 March 2019. The closing date to receive completed applications is 30 April 2019.

18 Summer Closure

Members were asked to approve the closure of the Town Hall for one afternoon during the summer, to enable a summer staff event to take place, at officers' own expense.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Town Hall is closed for one afternoon during the summer, to enable a summer staff event to take place, at Officer's own expense.*

The meeting concluded at 19.04pm

Signed
Chairman, 14 May 2019