

Full Council (on behalf of Policy & Resources Committee)

Date:	16 June 2020
Title:	Reports - External Organisations

a) Barns Centre (Cllrs Deacock and Dodds)

The Trustees continue to meet virtually to discuss on-going issues. The Barns are obviously still closed but remaining staff still have issues to deal with; insurance, cancellation of bookings etc.

At the outset of lockdown we had a security issue, a break-in and theft of a CCTV camera. Last week a further camera was removed from the rear of the small hall, this is the wall facing the car park. There have been reports from local residents of activity in this area at night-time which have been duly reported to the police.

b) Citizens Advice (Cllr Austin)

1. Since March 23, CA have equipped most of their advisers to operate the AdviceLine service from home. This has been quite an undertaking as there are lots of security and confidentiality protocols to observe and they also have to be linked to the Citizens Advice computer system and to a Supervisor.
2. The main topics from the public are: Employment, Universal credit and Coronavirus. Enquiries about employment issues are double what CA normally get.
3. CA are expecting a surge in people coming to us with debt problems as the lockdown eases.
4. CA want to recruit more volunteer advisers and have placed adverts quite widely throughout the 2 districts.

c) Health Hub (including Community Hub Pilot) (Cllr Champken-Woods)

There has been no progress on the Health Hub during these times of Covid 19. Surgeries will update me with any news on Returning to a more normal situation.

Report from Ben Collins at BHT Community Hub

The Trust and our partners in health and social care responded incredibly quickly to the pandemic response, radically adapting our services so that we could minimise the risk to our patients and staff. As you will be aware this involved the temporary suspension of CATS and other services in Thame Hospital and elsewhere.

We are now in the process of recovery, i.e. working out how we safely continue to provide care, whilst managing the coronavirus risk. In order to do this, we need to do many things, including:

- Investigate how we can deliver care to vulnerable patients, or those who have been instructed to self-isolate ('shielding' patients).
- Introduce measures so that patients can use sites like Thame hospital, without risk of infection. This might include limiting numbers of patients in waiting areas, and a 'one way' system though the hospital with separate entrances and exits.

- Working with primary care colleagues to understand the recovery challenges they face, and how we can work together to care for our population.

Our teams have been incredibly flexible and innovative to get us to where we are, and although it have been a huge challenge, there is now a real opportunity to develop a healthcare system that is the right one for the future of Buckinghamshire.

d) NALC (Cllr Dyer)

NALC have continued to lobby Government on behalf of the Town & Parish sector, and have focussed almost entirely on the challenges facing Councils during the pandemic. They have shared advice and best practice throughout, which has been circulated to Councillors, staff and the community as appropriate.

Once life returns to some form of normal they have identified the perfect opportunity to champion the contribution of smaller Councils and the importance of community, and will campaign to raise the profile of the sector and advance the causes of greater devolution and localism.

e) Red Kite Family Centre (Cllr Emery)

Report to Thame Town Council on the work of the Red Kite Family Centre June 2020

Dear Linda and other members of Thame Town Council,

We wanted to write and give you an update on the work of the Family Centre and also to once again express our gratitude for your continuing financial support. As you can imagine the current covid19 emergency has had a big impact on how we operate and the services that we are able to offer. At the start of the emergency we set ourselves three priorities:

- The health and well-being of each member of our staff team is our top priority.
- The second priority is to maintain what we can of the Family Centre's role of advice and support to families with young children.
- The third priority is to work on the continued sustainability of our charity.

In common with most settings like ours, we made the decision to close the Family Centre as a drop-in and stop all our parent and child sessions. We have enhanced our online presence with daily updates to our Facebook page and a special 'RedKite@home' area on our website. In addition, the staff are maintaining regular phone contact with about 30 vulnerable families known to us, attending virtual Team around the Family meetings and liaising closely with other support services and settings in the town. They are responding to phone calls during our usual working hours and to emails and have also set up some virtual groups to keep in touch with our regular parent users.

Additionally we have considered other online services we can offer and as a result we have facilitated online training sessions for the staff team who are now trained to use Makaton sign language with singing and eight parents are currently completing their level 1 in Makaton sign language.

By the middle of May it was clear that we didn't need the whole staff team to be working to achieve these aims and so the decision was taken to use the government's job retention scheme. With schools being closed staff were finding it difficult to manage childcare alongside work commitments as well. Three staff have been furloughed and we are reviewing this regularly, whilst Amy and Helen (our outreach worker for Chinnor) are working an 80% commitment to maintain the centre's role as described.

We feel grateful that Local families expecting babies and those with newborns have still been able to make use of the Family Centre as the midwifery team have used the space for 1:1 appointments during Covid 19 and they continue to do so.

In common with many other charities our sources of income have been badly hit by the emergency. All our paid for activities and fundraising events have had to be cancelled or postponed indefinitely and we have had some withdrawals from our 'Friends' scheme as well. David Bretherton, chair of South Oxfordshire District Council, had nominated us as his chosen charity for the year but sadly, most of the fundraising events he planned have not been able to go ahead for obvious reasons.

We have begun plans for the coming months and our Autumn programme and our reopening plans currently look as follows:

- We are looking into the possibility of starting up one to one-consultations at the centre in July.
- We are looking into the feasibility of running our planned holiday club in August, ideally for three days a week for four weeks as before.
- We are hoping that we can begin a phased reintroduction of centre based sessions in September, subject to the government guidelines at that time.
- Our planned roadshow based in an inflatable marquee which is aimed at raising awareness of Family Centre activities in the wider community, and in particular the new housing developments in both Thame and Chinnor has had to be put on hold because of the current emergency. We are hoping to run some sessions this coming autumn.

We all hope that the current emergency situation eases before too long as we know what a serious impact it is having on many households, businesses and charities.

We want to thank Thame Town Council for your continued support. The annual budget allocation that you have made to us is making a very significant difference to our sustainability.

Amy Spicer, Family Centre Leader and John Hulett, Chair of Trustees.

f) Thame Business Forum (Cllr Dyer)

The Business Forum met on 25 February, at a time when businesses were already implementing changes in anticipation of the impending pandemic. Following the usual planning update discussions mostly centred on setting out an agenda for topics to be covered through 2020. Unfortunately everything changed with lockdown when the emphasis switched to business survival, but the networks established through the Business Forum facilitated mutual support amongst the businesses themselves as well as between business and community.

The contributions made by Windles, Groves, Kubota and Adactus have been well publicised but many other local companies have selflessly stepped up to the challenge in many different and sometimes unique ways. TTC have also facilitated Basecamp, an online business forum, which has forged further links between businesses, including High Street retail, and local community groups.

The next scheduled Business Forum meeting on 7 July will almost certainly have to be cancelled but it is hoped that we can re-convene in September.

g) Thame Senior Friendship Centre (formerly known as Thame & District Day Centre) (Cllr Midwinter)

Since the closure of the Thame Senior Friendship Centre on Tuesday 17th March I hope this finds everyone safe and well. We have been updating everyone on what we are doing, and we will be organising a press release informing the local community of the name change which appears to be well received. The new logo as you can see is based on the double cross of the Thame Town Badge.

However, the closure has afforded us the time to make some changes as the Day Centre on re-opening will now be known as the Thame Senior Friendship Centre.

As you can imagine there is a huge amount of information being received during the Covid-19 pandemic and we are keeping up to date on information within Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

The work continues whilst everyone is self-isolating and the staff, volunteers and trustees are buddied up with a member and contacting them every few days.

We have been able to help the Rycote GP practice with a supply of disposable gloves and loaned them our defibrillator so that they can set up a specific Covid-19 clinic area which is isolated from the rest of the surgery.

Two of our drivers are helping to deliver medicines and I know 'Love Thame Helpers' have been doing some great work within the community.

Gill the manager, Kate the deputy manager and the trustees are continuing to work whilst TSFC is closed as Gill is revising all the policies with the help of Kate and trustees. Kate, also calls into the Centre to ensure everything is continuing to work, has turned on the air conditioning in the freezer room and is collecting mail, photocopying etc. Training is also continuing.

The first floor of the Cricket pavilion has also been redecorated ready for our return at some point in the future.

We are continuing to work with Laura, a local marketing consultant who has been working closely with Chinnor Web Design to design a new website. This will allow the public to complete forms on-line and be much more user friendly. The new logo is being added to all our paperwork and we now have a new draft leaflet which is available for you today but has a few corrections to be made.

Since our move in March 2019, the TSFC has undergone some significant changes which will culminate in the rebranding and name change.

The manager of TSFC will be retiring in September so we will be advertising the post shortly once all the paperwork has been completed which is being supported by a local HR professional. I would appreciate that this is not communicated locally as the manager has yet to inform members or volunteers of her retirement.

Covid-19 unfortunately will have wide ranging implications for the service and we will have to work very differently once we are able to return. We do have a wealth of knowledge from both a procurement and health service professional who maintain contact with clinical/managerial and surgical companies to facilitate our re-opening when the time comes.

Rest assured all staff, volunteers and trustees are continuing to work to ensure we continue in supporting those who are isolated and vulnerable within our community.

We look forward to seeing everyone so please keep safe and well.

h) Thame & District Housing Association (Cllr Emery)

Most staff have been working from home due to COVID-19 restrictions. The staff have continued to support residents, mostly by telephone, and have helped link people into community initiatives for additional support through the Town Council. The restrictions remain challenging for our residents and they are working hard to support and encourage them at this difficult time. There have been no reported virus cases.

The year-end audit has been carried out remotely this year and the financial statements will be published in due course.

A planning application for the refurbishment and updating of Croft Court has recently been submitted.

i) Thame Youth Memorial Trust (Cllr Tipping)

No meetings, nothing to note.

j) Thame Youth Projects Group (Cllr Tipping)

- All Meetings since our last report has been done via zoom (Surprise, surprise).
- James has been running Zoom activities which seem to have been quite a success with those whom have attended. It has been a taskmaster like activity.
- The Youth page is also running a competition to win a cash prize to encourage creative activities such as baking, painting, singing, dancing or drawing.
- The members have already been displaying their creative sides with examples of painting etc on the page.
- Building update - We are looking at aspects of fundraising we can start to put into place during this difficult period.
- We've changed our logo since our last report, with help and feedback from the youth when we were able to still run with the youth involved in the real world. This has helped give us a new look for marketing.

- We have also redesigned our website <https://www.thameyouthprojects.org.uk> Designed by Aimee and Nick which seems to have been a great success with a fantastic fresh new look.
- Attendance's before the lockdown at Youth Cafe has been steadily growing

k) 21st Century Thame (Cllr Fickling and Francis)

Nothing received at 10.6.20.

l) Welfare Trust (Cllr Champken-Woods)

There is not a meeting until July.