

Policy & Resources Committee

Date: Tuesday 12 April 2022
Title: Report - External Organisations

a) Barns Centre (Cllrs Deacock and Dodds)

Nothing received at 06/04/2022

b) Citizens Advice (Cllr Austin)

Nothing to report.

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

Discussions are ongoing.

d) NALC (Cllr Dyer)

NALC continue their work on behalf of town and parish councils, though none of their current campaigns appear to be directly relevant or of specific interest to Thame, though there are two current campaigns of a more general interest. They are continuing to urge the Government to make permanent the provision for councils at all levels to be allowed to hold remote meetings, and they are now also lobbying Government with regard to ethical standards. The Committee on Standards in Public Life have recommended that the standards regime be strengthened to address poor behaviour, including the reintroduction of suspensions for Councillors. Government does not support the proposal but NALC disagree and are engaging further to make their case.

e) Red Kite Family Centre (Cllr Emery)

"I am delighted to be reporting on behalf of the RKFC in my new role as Manager. Over the past three months I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the team and the families that we support in our local community and understanding just how special and unique the centre is in the work that it does.

We have continued to see attendance steadily grow in our regular stay and play sessions in both Chinnor, Moreton and Thame. As a response to feedback from families and colleagues, we have begun a trial drop-in session on a Thursday in Thame. We will look to increase this flexibility for families to use the centre going forward whilst also keeping sessions manageable and safe for families. We have run our Saturday Dad's play session, which was well attended, as well as our most recent Easter Messy play where families were welcomed to both Thame and Moreton to take part in an Easter egg hunt and crafting activities.

There have been several new courses running over the past two terms. In response to feedback, we identified that mental health support in particular was an area which needed provisioning. We have successfully run one 6 week course with a waiting list and are due to run our second starting on 25th April. In addition to this, we have launched a new ante-natal group. The 'Bump Café' which supports expectant parents with how best to prepare for their new baby as well as providing an opportunity to ask questions in a safe and supporting environment. Two more courses are starting soon: 'Starting Solids' on Tuesday 5th April and 'Starting School' on 25th April and 3rd May. Both have been designed to reach out to new and existing families in Thame who perhaps have not used our centre before but would like more information on how to help and support their child with a new developmental stage. We are running some evening workshops for working parents to enable wider participation at these courses.

At our farm site in Moreton we have recently completed a 6 week adult education course in Outdoor Learning. This course, amongst others at the centre, continues to be run through Abingdon and Witney college and provides an important part of our funding stream. Parents and carers took part in a range of activities from Dam Building and making Story Stones to Tipi Making and Big Nature Art. We had enormous fun in this fabulous environment, whilst also enjoying the new spring additions on the farmyard!

This Easter during the school holidays, we have two workshops for families- Zoo Lab will be visiting on Tuesday 12th April and Mrs Bun the Baker will be doing two cookery workshops on Thursday 14th April. Both of these sessions have been funded by SOHA and we are hoping many of their residents will attend. Funded spaces are available for residents and non-residents can book on via our website at a cost of £5 per family.

In addition to our courses and workshops, we have also been busy planning several fundraising events to raise the profile of the centre and to bring in funds for future projects. Thame Children's Cinema is one such event which will be launching again in the Autumn in collaboration with Thame Players Theatre. Once licensing permission has been granted, we will be advertising our selection of films for all the family which will be screened once a term on Saturdays or Sundays.

On the 7th and 14th June the RKFC will be holding a stall at Thame Community Market. We are hoping to reach out to new families whilst also selling home-grown plants and doing some planting with the young children. In conjunction with this event, we have also been working hard on improving our outdoor garden in Thame. The new planting beds have been prepared and Waitrose have donated some plants for these; including herbs for the children to use in the Mud Kitchen.

As I write this report, we are currently setting up for our Volunteer Event this evening 5th April. We are hoping to recruit new volunteers for a range of projects that we would like to start at the centre- in particular establishing an Events Team to help with;- the Thame Carnival, Music in the Park, Red Kite Roadshow as well as at the Cinema Events and Plant Sale. Existing volunteers have been invited to talk about previous work that they have done for Red Kite as well as how they would like to help in the future. If you, or anyone else at the council knows of anyone who would like to be involved please do get in contact with us.

Of course, it would be inaccurate to report that there has been a quarter period without challenges. Covid continues to present problems as regarding staffing but these have been overcome with some excellent team working and a fantastic 'can-do' attitude from everyone. The storm caused damage at Moreton and Chinnor with a fallen tree and an up-ended compost toilet. However, these have thankfully been resolved!

With Kind regards,

Sarah Candy
Manager
Red Kite Family Centre"

f) Thame Business Forum (Cllr Dyer)

The Business Forum held their second post-Covid meeting at Rhubarb Solutions on 8 February, at which Lord Williams's School gave a presentation on how local businesses can work with LWS to recruit students into apprenticeship roles. The next meeting is scheduled for 26 April, will be hosted by Thame Sports Club, and will include a presentation by Robin Bennett, SODC Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

g) Thame Senior Friendship Centre (Cllr Midwinter)

See attached report.

h) Thame & District Housing Association (Cllr Emery)

In discussion with Cllr Emery and council officers, it has been agreed that the External Organisation report for Thame & District Housing Association will be removed. There is often nothing to report and the Town Council does not have any involvement with the organisation at present. If circumstances change, an external representative can be re-appointed in future. This will also be reported at the Annual Meeting in May.

i) Thame Youth Memorial Trust (representative vacancy)

Nothing received at 06/04/2022

j) Thame Youth Projects Group (representative vacancy)

Nothing received at 06/04/2022

k) 21st Century Thame (Cllr Fickling)

Nothing received at 06/04/2022

l) Welfare Trust (Cllr Champken-Woods)

Nothing to report. The next meeting is July.