

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of
Thatcham Town Council
held on Monday 29th January 2024 at 19.00hrs
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Mark Lillycrop (Mayor)
 Councillors Suzanne Adamantos, Jeff Brooks, John Boyd, Mike Cole,
 Iain Cottingham, Owen Jeffery, Jay Lunn, Tom McCann, Justin Pemberton,
 Petra Pemberton, Simon Pike, Ben Schiffer-Harte, Stephanie Steevenson and
 Val Watts

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk)
 Nikki Coome and Jenny Kirby, Eco Friends (West Berkshire)

FULL/2024/001 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeremy Cottam and
 Lee Dillon.

FULL/2024/002 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

FULL/2024/003 ECO FRIENDS (WEST BERKSHIRE)

RESOLVED to allow members of public to speak

- a) Nikki Coome introduced Eco Friends West Berkshire to Council, and
 provided an overview of Plastic Free Thatcham, achievements during 2023
 and plans for 2024, and answered Members questions.
- b) Council considered a recommendation from the Recreation and Amenities
 Committee and Environmental Working Party, arising from meetings on 11th
 December 2023 (RA/2023/057) and 13th November 2023 (EVW/2023/49ii)
 respectively, that a draft Thatcham Town Council Charter, prepared in
 partnership with Eco Friends (West Berkshire) and Plastic Free Thatcham,
 be adopted.

RESOLVED to adopt the Thatcham Town Council Charter, as presented (appendix I).

Councillors thanked Nikki and Jenny for attending and they left the meeting

FULL/2024/004 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

FULL/2024/005 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2023, having been
 previously circulated, be signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Councillor Adamantos left the meeting during the following item, feeling unwell

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FULL/2024/006 REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

a) Mayor's Report

Councillor Lillycrop reported that since the last meeting he had attended events including; Kennet Performing Arts Winter performance, a Borneo fundraising market, Barfield Handbell Ringers, Thatcham Rotary's Santa Fun Run, Berkshire Music Trust's Winter Concert, Co-Op Funeralcare meet and greet, Francis Baily School Christmas Carol Concert, Newbury Royal British Legion ceremony at the American Memorial site, presented the peoples' choice Christmas Window award to House of Cards, tree planting at Henleys Allotments, West Berkshire Volunteer Centre 50th Anniversary recruitment fair, Community United Tamil Thai Pongal Festival, Thatcham Cancer Support Group 5th anniversary coffee morning, Holocaust Memorial Day and Plastic Free Thatcham's mass unwrap at Co-Op.

The Mayor also judged the Town Council's annual Christmas window display competition amongst town centre businesses and attended the Christmas Lights' switch on and Christmas Market, and hosted the Civic Carol Service and a Christmas coffee morning.

b) Deputy Mayor's Report

The Mayor presented the Deputy Mayor's report on behalf of Councillor Adamantos, highlighting that since the last meeting she had attended several events, including; Lunch at Fair Close Centre, Cold Ash Brass Christmas Concert, Newbury toy appeal, a Christmas Day visit to West Berkshire Hospital and visited the site of flooding on Crookham Hill.

The Deputy Mayor also helped the Mayor judge the annual Christmas window display competition and attended the Town Council's Christmas Lights' switch on and Christmas Market, and the Mayor's Civic Carol Service and Christmas coffee morning.

FULL/2024/007 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2024/25

Council considered a draft budget for the financial year 2024/25, recommended to Council by the Finance and General Purposes Committee following its meeting on 22nd January 2024 (FGP/2024/08(a)) along with a report on current and projected Reserves.

For illustration, the Town Council's element of the Council Tax Band D equivalent for 2024/25 would be £110.98 per annum.

RESOLVED

to adopt the draft budget as presented (appendix II) and that a precept of £1,013,615 be issued in accordance with the requirements of Section 150 (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to meet the expenditure as set out in the budget.

FULL/2024/008 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

The following Committee Minutes were presented for adoption:

a) Finance and General Purposes Committee minutes dated 22nd January 2024.

RESOLVED

to adopt the Minutes.

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FULL/2024/008 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES continued

RESOLVED b) Recreation and Amenities Committee minutes dated 11th December 2023. to adopt the Minutes.

RESOLVED c) Planning and Highways Committee Minutes dated 12th December 2023 and 16th January 2024. to adopt the Minutes.

RESOLVED d) Staff Committee Minutes dated 16th January 2024. to adopt the Minutes.

FULL/2024/009 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - IN6: INSPECTOR'S MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS AND WRITTEN STATEMENTS

At its meeting on 16th January 2024 (PH/2024/006), the Planning and Highways Committee considered the document; IN6 Inspector's matters, issues and questions and written statements, relating to examination of the West Berkshire Local Plan 2022-2039. Council considered a recommendation from the Committee that authority be delegated to the Planning and Highways Committee to develop a response, based on development of a table of responses presented at this meeting.

RESOLVED Council requested that thanks be recorded to Councillor Pike and [former Councillor] David Lister for their efforts in the Local Plan Review. to delegate authority to the Planning and Highways Committee to respond to the Inspector's report 'IN6...', in line with the key points presented at the meeting.

FULL/2024/010 RESIGNATION OF CHRISTINE RICE

Council noted that Christine Rice resigned as a Town Councillor with effect from 16th January 2024. Notice of the vacancy was published on 18th January 2024 and West Berkshire Council's Electoral Services Manager advised that the expiry date for electors to claim a by-election was 7th February 2024. The resignation resulted in a vacancy on the Events Committee.

RESOLVED It was agreed that the Mayor would write to thank Christine for her service. that Councillor Boyd be appointed to the Events Committee.

FULL/2024/011 COMMUNITY AWARDS PANEL

Council considered appointments to accompany the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on the Community Awards Panel, which would meet on Monday 25th March 2024 to agree the Community Awards 2024, to be presented at the Annual Town Meeting on 25th April 2024.

RESOLVED Categories were: Community Contributor, Environmental Champion, Inspiring Young Person and Lifetime Achievement. to appoint Councillors Cole and P Pemberton to the Community Awards Panel, alongside the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

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FULL/2024/012 REPORTS

- a) Reports from Thatcham Town Councillors and West Berkshire District Councillors on Council Surgeries**
- i. Council noted a report from Councillors J Pemberton and Schiffer-Harte who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 2nd December 2023.
 Councillor J Pemberton agreed to pursue reports regarding parked cars on Northfield Road and vehicle weight limits on Heath Lane/Bowling Green Road with West Berkshire Council.
 - ii. Council noted a report from Councillors Cottam and Jeffery who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 6th January 2024.
 Councillor Jeffery recommended that no surgery be held in January in future due to low attendance and general footfall.
 Councillor Cottingham encouraged Thames Valley Police to take action on illegal use and dangerous riding of E-Scooters, this was supported by Councillor Lunn who advised of issues in the High Street.
- b) Reports from West Berkshire District Councillors**
 The following reports from West Berkshire District Councillors were noted:
- Councillor Brooks reported that following West Berkshire Council's proposal to withdraw the Local Plan, the Minister had written instructing that the Plan should not be withdrawn. West Berkshire Council would now make representation to the Inspector. Councillor Brooks also reported that a peer review would be taking place the following week, and an enormous amount of work had gone into preparing a balanced budget for 2024/25.
- Councillor Cole left the meeting*
- c) Outside Body Reports**
 Reports from a number of appointees to outside bodies were noted.

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 20:47hrs.

Signed: _____ Date: _____