

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the
Events Committee
held on Monday 3rd February 2025 at 19:00hrs
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Suzanne Adamantos (Chairman)
 Councillors Mark Lillycrop, Dave Lunn, Jay Lunn, Petra Pemberton and
 Stephanie Steevenson

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk) and Sarah Newman (Events Manager)
 Councillors Tom McCann and Val Watts

EV/2025/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ben Schiffer-Harte.

EV/2025/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Dave Lunn and Jay Lunn declared non-pecuniary interests in town centre activities as the owners of a town centre business, Picture It Framed.

EV/2025/03 MINUTES PREVIOUS EVENTS COMMITTEE
RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2024, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed, and signed as an accurate record.

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

EV/2025/04 HERITAGE WORKING PARTY
RESOLVED

To adopt the Minutes of the Heritage Working Party meeting held on 28th January 2025.

RESOLVED

- i) Events Manager highlighted the request for funds made by the Heritage Working Party for the printing of the Blue Plaque Leaflets. to approve expenditure of up to £150 for printing of Blue Plaque leaflets, to be funded from the Heritage 2024/25 budget underspend.
- ii) The replaced VC stones were discussed and Committee requested that once the Heritage Working Party had discussed this with the Royal British Legion, that the decision comes back to the Events committee for final approval.
- iii) Committee considered a request from the Heritage Working Party to plant Peace Roses on the Broadway Green as part of the commemoration of VE Day 80. Committee agreed that this would be discussed at the next Events Working Party meeting, to be potentially incorporated as part of the VE Day celebrations.
- iv) Councillor Lillycrop provided an update on the Beating of the Bounds event, which had evolved and would now be a couple of smaller events which would be incorporated into Thatcham Festival.

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EV/2025/05 BUDGET REVIEW 2024/25

- i) Committee reviewed the Budget for the financial year 2024/25 to date along with the adopted event budgets for 2025/26.
- ii) Committee discussed sponsorship for events and how this could be increased for 2025/26. The Events Manager gave an update on the strategy for the year. The Committee requested that a sponsorship update be given at each Events Committee meeting and offered help where required to reach out to Businesses for sponsorship.

EV/2025/06 REVIEW THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF FAMILY FUN DAY, THATCHAM FESTIVAL AND WARMING UP FOR CHRISTMAS EVENTS 2025+

The Town Clerk explained that the current Aims and Objectives for these events had not been reviewed for some time and, in some cases, were no longer relevant, and expressed the need for these to be reviewed and updated in order to give Officers clear Aims and Objectives for each of the major Events.

RESOLVED To adopt the proposed Aims and Objectives as outlined in the following appendices;

Appendix 1 – Family Fun Day - Aims and Objectives

Appendix 2 – Thatcham Festival - Aims and Objectives

Appendix 3 - Warming up for Christmas – Aims and Objectives

EV/2025/07 FAMILY FUN DAY

The date was confirmed as Sunday 29th June 2025. Committee discussed key improvement points for 2025 including a Larger Stage, Navigation and Toilets. It was agreed that this be discussed at the next Events Working Party, along with potential new layout options.

EV/2025/08 KIDSFEST

The date was confirmed as Thursday 28th August 2025. Committee was in agreement with the proposed Dinosaur Theme for KidsFest 2025. It was agreed that there would be no fancy-dress competition in 2025, following a lack of participants in 2024.

EV/2025/09 THATCHAM FESTIVAL

The dates were confirmed as Friday 10th October – Sunday 19th October 2025. Committee discussed the content for this year's Festival. There was a strong interest in ensuring a broader variety of events that appealed to a wider demographic. Committee expressed a desire to include events that catered to a diverse audience and created a more inclusive Festival experience for all ages. It was agreed that further discussion on the content should take place at the next Events Working Party meeting.

EV/2025/10 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

- i) The Events Manager provided a brief verbal update on the feedback from 2024, which was generally positive with a few points for consideration for 2025.

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EV/2025/10 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY continued

- ii) Committee requested that the Events Manager approach Thatcham Memorial Foundation to discuss the possibility of hosting refreshments at the Memorial Hall for Armistice Day 2025, as this location felt more relevant for the occasion.

EV/2025/11 WARMING UP FOR CHRISTMAS

- i) The dates for Warming Up for Christmas were agreed as Friday 5th December to Sunday 7th December 2025. Committee was in agreement to involve the High Street again for 2025 and to include a Christmas Market on the Saturday as part of the Warming up for Christmas weekend.
- ii) The new Christmas Light scheme was discussed. While the overall effect of the lights was deemed positive, Committee felt the "switch-on" experience was somewhat underwhelming compared to previous years. The Events Manager was tasked with checking the lights in storage and reporting back at the next Events Working Party meeting. Additionally, Committee requested that alternative, more impactful locations for the Gobo be explored for 2025.
- iii) The Christmas Window Competition was discussed and a general "Christmas" theme was agreed upon. The aim being to encourage more businesses to participate, with a broader and more inclusive theme.

Councillor Pemberton enquired whether the Freedom of the Town Parade would be taking place in 2025, as she had been approached regarding the event. The Town Clerk confirmed that an allowance in the 2025/26 Budget had been agreed in order for planning to start for the event to take place in 2026.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20:55hrs

Signed: _____ Date: _____