

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of
Thatcham Town Council
held on Monday 31st March 2025 at 19:00hrs
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

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

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk) and Laura Carlin (Deputy Town Clerk)
 1 Member of the press (Newbury Weekly News)

FULL/2025/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeremy Cottam and Jay Lunn. An apology for lateness was received from Councillor Jeff Brooks.

FULL/2025/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

FULL/2025/17 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No public questions had been received.

**FULL/2025/18 MINUTES
RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2025, having been previously circulated, be taken as read and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

In regard to Minute reference FULL/2025/03i – Thatcham Community Hub – Councillor Jeffery advised that further information should be available around the end of April 2025.

FULL/2025/19 REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

a) Mayor's Report

Councillor Adamantos reported that from 28th January 2025 to date, she had attended a variety of events including: Yinka Shonibare art exhibition at The Base, launch of Barclays Mobile Banking van at the Friday market, KATS production of Treasure Island, Blue Plaque unveiling at Bradley-Moore House, Thatcham Unplugged, a visit to Thatcham Park School, special assembly at Spurcroft School for Crossing Patrol Warden's 30th anniversary, Ignite The Stage at Arlington Arts, Swings & Smiles charity quiz night, a visit to Francis Baily primary school, Diamond Quality Care open event, Berkshire Music Trust's Junior Music Festival, Trinity School production of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and a visit to Sing Louder Choir.

In addition, the Mayor also attended the following Town Council events; Chinese New Year Market, hosted a fundraising Bingo night for the Mayor's chosen charities, Thatcham Volunteer Fair and led a Commonwealth Day service.

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FULL/2025/19 REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR continued

b) Deputy Mayor's Report

Councillor P Pemberton reported that from 28th January 2025 to date, she had attended a variety of events including: Turner Place with Bridge For Young People and a coffee morning at Turner Place, the Magistrates Court mock trial competition for schools, the funeral of Edith Hutchings (widow of former Mayor of Thatcham, Frank Hutchings) and the Sing Louder Choir. In addition, the Deputy Mayor also attended the following Town Council events; Chinese New Year Market, the Mayor's charity Bingo night, Thatcham Volunteer Fair and a Commonwealth Day service.

Councillor Cottingham joined the meeting

FULL/2025/20 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

The following Committee Minutes were presented for adoption:

a) Planning and Highways Committee Minutes dated 11th February 2025 and 11th March 2025.

RESOLVED to adopt the Minutes.

b) Events Committee Minutes dated 3rd February 2025.

RESOLVED to adopt the Minutes.

FULL/2025/21 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT 2024/25

Councillor Brooks joined the meeting during this item

Council received the Internal Auditor's report following an Interim Internal Audit carried out on 4th February 2025.

RESOLVED to adopt the Internal Auditor's Interim Report 2024/25.

FULL/2025/22 INTERNAL CONTROL POLICY

Council considered a draft Internal Control Policy 2024/25.

RESOLVED to adopt the Internal Control Policy 2024/25, as presented.

FULL/2025/23 NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT 2023/24

Council noted the External Auditor's Report for the year ended 31st March 2024, which stated that 'on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.'

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP 25th September 2024.

Notice of conclusion of audit was published on 30th September 2024.

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FULL/2025/24 TRUSTEESHIP OF THATCHAM YOUTH CHARITY

Council received a report from the Town Clerk advising that the Town Council had taken urgent, interim control of the Thatcham Youth Charity following the resignation of all Trustees at a meeting of the Charity in October 2024. All functions of the Charity had continued with minimal disruption, including the day-to-day management of Moorside Community Centre. It was noted that there were considerable maintenance issues with Moorside Community Centre.

RESOLVED to: (i) note the Town Clerk's report and endorse the interim measures put in place; (ii) confirm the transfer of the Charity to Thatcham Town Council as sole Trustee, and; (iii) that a meeting of the Council, as Trustee, be convened at the earliest opportunity.

FULL/2025/25 REPORTS

a) Reports from Thatcham Town Councillors and West Berkshire District Councillors on Council Surgeries

Council noted reports from:

- i. Councillors Dave Lunn and Jeff Brooks who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 1st February 2025, and
- ii. Councillors Tom McCann and Iain Cottingham who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 1st March 2025.

b) Reports from West Berkshire District Councillors

The following reports from West Berkshire District Councillors were noted:

Councillor Brooks reported that West Berkshire Council had passed its budget for 2025/26, with an underpinning loan from the government. Social care, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and an aging population providing the biggest budget pressures. £12m would be spent on roads, as well as investment in Kennet Leisure Centre and refurbishment of netball courts behind Kennet School. Councillor Brooks encouraged Council to review the opportunities to enhance library provision, and advised that the next District Parish Conference would be held on 30th April 2025.

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 20:26hrs.

Signed: _____ Date: _____