

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of the
Town Centre Committee
held on Monday 6th March 2023 at 7pm
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Owen Jeffery (Chairman)
 Councillors Lourdes Cottam, Richard Crumly (substituting for Ellen Crumly), Mark Lillycrop, David Lister, Simon Pike and Christine Rice

In attendance: John Sackett (Events Manager)

TC/2023/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeremy Cottam and Ellen Crumly (Richard Crumly appointed as substitute).

TC/2023/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 There were no declarations of interest.

TC/2023/15 MINUTES
RESOLVED to take as read and confirm as accurate the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2023.

TC/2023/16 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING
 There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

TC/2023/17 INCOME / EXPENDITURE COSTS
 Councillors noted income and expenditure for this Committee's budgets for the financial year to date.

TC/2023/18 BROADWAY GREEN
 i. Members considered a quotation of £890 for the supply and installation of an additional gate at the southern end of the Broadway Green, as requested at a previous meeting.
RESOLVED to agree to the proposal and to recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that expenditure of £890 be approved from existing Community Infrastructure Levy funds held.

ii. Members considered a quotation of £2,468 to replace newly planted hedging around the Broadway Green, resulting from a period of extremely dry weather in summer 2022. This cost did not include watering, at £140 per visit. Officers were assessing the logistics of purchasing a water bowser but noting that this would require considerable physical resource.
RESOLVED to approve expenditure of £2,468 for the supply and planting of replacement hedging on the Broadway Green, funded from a projected underspend of £3,000 on the grounds' maintenance budgets for this financial year, and to defer a decision on watering arrangements to a future appropriate meeting.

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- TC/2023/19 TOWN CENTRE CAR PARKING**
 Members considered town centre car parking issues that had been raised with the Deputy Mayor by local businesses. It was reported that the closure of banks had affected business, as they were a draw into the town for many, also elderly shoppers needed to park close to shops and there was inadequate provision for this in the High Street.
- It was also noted that there were inconsistent parking tariffs across the town, with 14 car parks run by 7 different operators. Whilst it was acknowledged that there was little the Town Council could do, it could provide information on the location and charges of car parks. Members noted that car parking may be included in the impending Thatcham Place-Making Strategy being compiled by Hemingway Design on behalf of West Berkshire Council, and it was agreed to await publication and review of the Strategy prior to consideration of any further actions on this matter.
- TC/2023/20 CONSERVATION AREA**
 The Chairman gave an overview of the current conservation area and invited comment on potential extension.
- RESOLVED** to request that the Town Clerk investigates the process for requesting extension of the conservation area to include Chapel Street, at least as far as The Moors.
- TC/2023/21 TOWN CENTRE PHARMACIES**
 Following comments from residents experiencing difficulty with town centre pharmacies, and the Committee Chairman's engagement with relevant partners, it was noted that the majority of the issues had now been resolved.
- TC/2023/22 THATCHAM PLACE-MAKING STRATEGY**
 It was noted that, following a verbal report from the Chairman at the last two meetings, regarding meetings with Hemingway Design, appointed by West Berkshire Council to undertake Place-Making Strategies for Thatcham and Hungerford Town Centres, a public consultation closed on 9th January 2023 and a follow up meeting of stakeholders was held on Tuesday 24th January 2023 to consider the consultation feedback. A final [online] meeting of stakeholders was scheduled for 7th March 2023 to review the draft final report ahead of its publication.
- TC/2023/23 VICTORIA CROSS MEMORIAL STONES**
 Regarding relocation of the Victoria Cross Memorial Stones, discussed at previous meetings, it was noted that replacement stones had been produced and delivered to the stonemason and the mounting plinths were expected mid-March. It was hoped that an unveiling could be arranged for late March, once confirmation of a proposed installation date was received.

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TC/2023/24 PUBLIC TOILETS
Changing Places

It was noted that, due to resource issues, West Berkshire Council had requested an extension to the delivery deadline for proposed Changing Places installations in Thatcham and Hungerford, and a site meeting would shortly take place to consider two draft proposals. Further details would be presented to a future meeting.

TC/2023/25 COMMUNITY PROJECT FUND APPLICATION

Following award at the last meeting of £350 from the Community Project Fund to Royal British Legion Thatcham Branch, to purchase Two Silent Soldiers, it was noted that a letter of thanks had been received along with confirmation that the proposed location would be reviewed.

TC/2023/26 DEMENTIA FRIENDLY TOWN

- i. It was noted that Dementia Friendly West Berkshire would be hosting a Garden Party, on Tuesday 16th May, 11am – 1pm, at Jubilee Sensory Garden, Brownsfield Road to celebrate Dementia Action Week.
- ii. There were no updates from Councillors L Cottam, Jeffery and Rice on actions to support creation of a dementia friendly town.

TC/2023/27 ACTION PLAN

Members considered the outstanding action “Artwork along the A4” from the Town Centre Action Plan and it was agreed to await publication of the Thatcham Place-Making Strategy.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____