

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of the
Finance and General Purposes Committee
held on Monday 24th April 2023 at 7pm
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Mike Cole (Chairman)
 Councillors Jeff Brooks, Jeremy Cottam, Lourdes Cottam,
 Richard Crumly, Richard Foster, Owen Jeffery and Simon Pike
 (substituting for Councillor David Lister)

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk)

FGP/2023/020 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lee Dillon and David Lister (Councillor Simon Pike appointed as substitute).

FGP/2023/021 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 There were no declarations of interest.

FGP/2023/022 MINUTES
RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 23rd January 2023 and 9th March 2023, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed, and signed as an accurate record.

FGP/2023/023 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING
 There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

FGP/2023/024 BUDGET REVIEW 2022/23
 a) Members reviewed the budget report for the whole Council budget for the financial year to date, noting that whilst the report covered the full financial year, it was still subject to minor adjustments as part of the year-end process.
 Members thanked Councillor Cole and Officers for their stringent financial management throughout a difficult financial period, with unpredicted challenges, such as an increase exceeding 1500% in the Business Rates charge for London Road Cemetery, reduced income at London Road Cemetery and soaring inflation impacting day-to-day costs.

b) Members noted a report on Reserves and CIL/s106 funds held.

FGP/2023/025 REQUEST FROM TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE
 At a meeting of the Town Centre Committee on 6th March 2023, the Committee approved a proposal to install an additional gate at the southern end of The Broadway Green at a cost of £890 (TC/2023/18). Members considered a request from the Town Centre Committee that this project be funded from existing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts [uncommitted balance as at 24.04.2023 = £18,922].
RESOLVED to approve expenditure of £890 from existing Community Infrastructure Levy funds held, for installation of an additional gate on the Broadway Green.

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- FGP/2023/026 IT UPGRADE**
 Members considered a report from the Town Clerk regarding a proposed IT upgrade.
RESOLVED to defer to a meeting of this Committee after the local election on 4th May 2023 and to invite the Town Council's IT service provider to attend to answer Members' questions.
- FGP/2023/027 REQUEST FROM HERITAGE WORKING PARTY**
 Members considered a request from the Heritage Working Party for funding for a Time Capsule project.
RESOLVED that given the time constraints, and to provide the Working Party with a commitment to work with, to approve a budget of up to £1,000 for the proposed Time Capsule project, funded from the remaining £5,500* allowance in the 2023/24 budget for Freedom of the Town (no longer taking place).
 * £7,500 budgeted for FOTT, less £2,000 committed for Coronation Garden Party
- FGP/2023/028 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND RISK REGISTER 2023/24**
 Members considered a draft Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register 2023/24.
RESOLVED to recommend the draft Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register 2023/24 to Full Council for adoption when it meets on 15th May 2023.
- FGP/2023/029 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2023/24**
 Members considered a draft Treasury Management Plan 2023/24.
RESOLVED to defer the draft Treasury Management Plan 2023/24 to the new Council for analysis, following the local election on 4th May 2023.
- FGP/2023/030 GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE**
RESOLVED to adopt the Minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee meeting held on 17th January 2023.
- FGP/2023/031 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORKING PARTY**
RESOLVED to adopt the Minutes of the Community Engagement Working Party meeting held on 16th February 2023.
- FGP/2023/032 FINANCIALS**
RESOLVED
- i. Members received proposed BACS payments due from the Imprest account.
 - to approve the proposed BACS payments (appendix I).
 - ii. Members noted details of pre-authorized payments from the Imprest Account, Soldo pre-paid debit card and Clerk's Account during the period 1st January 2023 to 31st March 2023 (appendix II).
 - iii. Members noted bank reconciliations (appendix III).
 - iv. Members noted an Aged Creditor report.
 - v. Members noted an Aged Debtor report.

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FGP/2023/033 REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCIL APPOINTEES

The following verbal reports were noted:

Home-Start West Berkshire

Councillor Foster reported that things were well managed and they had been successful in grant applications, as well as hosting coffee mornings and quizzes to raise funds. They had also recently received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. More volunteers always needed.

Thatcham Welfare and Support Society

Councillor L Cottam reported that they continued to distribute funds to those in need and had increased their publicity and networking. Next meeting in October 2023.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.38pm.

Signed _____ Date _____