

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of
Thatcham Town Council
held on Monday 25th November 2024 at 19:00hrs
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

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

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk) and Laura Carlin (Deputy Town Clerk)

FULL/2024/080 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeff Brooks, Lee Dillon, Dave Lunn, Jay Lunn and Val Watts.

FULL/2024/081 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There was a collective declaration of interest from all Councillors in relation to agenda item number 9 (FULL/2024/088) as recipients of Members' Allowances.

FULL/2024/082 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No public questions had been received.

Councillor Cottingham joined the meeting

FULL/2024/083 MINUTES

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2024, having been previously circulated, be taken as read and signed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Councillor Steevenson wished to record that remedial work to construct a drainage channel at Kennet Heath Play Area, approved at the last meeting of Council (FULL/2024/070(b)), had worked well during recent heavy rainfall.

FULL/2024/084 REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

a) Mayor's Report

Councillor Adamantos reported that from September to date, she had attended a variety of events including: Thatcham Rotary Duck Race, Chai & Chat, Swings & Smiles birthday celebration, a community litter pick, Community United's annual cricket match, Afternoon Tea with a local fundraiser, Vintage Adventure's birthday party, a visit to Trinity School, Macmillan Coffee Mornings at Alice Bye Court and in Bucklebury, Kurt Jackson 'Oak' exhibition at The Base, Barfield Handbell Ringers concert, Newbury College Careers Fair, Stroke Club, a visit to Response Organisation at Carramar House [The Priory], Trinity School House Performing Arts competition, Remembrance poppy workshop, WI Christmas Bazaar and a visit to Citizens' Advice West Berkshire.

The Mayor also attended several events during the Town Council's Thatcham Festival in October, as well as the annual Remembrance Parade and Service.

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FULL/2024/084 REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR continued

a) Mayor's Report continued

The Mayor also unveiled the Town Council's new water refill fountain in The Broadway. Councillor Adamantos also hosted a fundraising Barn Dance.

b) Deputy Mayor's Report

Councillor P Pemberton reported that from September to date, she had attended a variety of events including: several events during Thatcham Festival, Royal British Legion Thatcham Branch's visit to Commonwealth Graves in London Road Cemetery, Bridge for Young People's Fete, Greenham Trust Charity Awards, and Learner Achievement Awards.

FULL/2024/085 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

The following Committee Minutes were presented for adoption:

a) Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes dated 28th October 2024.

RESOLVED to adopt the Minutes.

b) Planning and Highways Committee Minutes dated 22nd October 2024.
to adopt the Minutes.

RESOLVED

FULL/2024/086 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Having agreed at the last meeting to proceed to undertake a Neighbourhood Development Plan (FULL/2024/073), Council considered the following:

- i. Draft Terms of Reference
- ii. Appointment of Councillors to the Steering Group
- iii. Proposed delegation of authority to the NDP Working Party (established at the last meeting of Full Council) to appoint members to the Steering Group, Working Groups and Chairmen

RESOLVED (i) to adopt the Terms of Reference, as presented, (ii) to appoint Councillors Owen Jeffery, Tom McCann, Simon Pike and Val Watts to the NDP Steering Group, and (iii) to delegate authority to the NDP Working Party to appoint members to the Steering Group and Working Parties and to appoint Chairmen.

FULL/2024/087 REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND PROXY VOTING

Council was advised that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government was holding a consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings, including parish & town council meetings. It was agreed not to respond as a Council but to encourage Councillors to respond individually.

FULL/2024/088 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WEST BERKSHIRE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

Council received a report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for West Berkshire Parish and Town Council [June 2024] and considered the recommended Members' and Mayor's allowance within.

RESOLVED to approve a Councillor Allowance of £438 per annum for Councillors and £1,315 per annum for the Mayor, with effect from the financial year 2025/26.

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FULL/2024/089 REPORTS

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

Council noted the following Council Surgery reports:

- i. From Councillors Lillycrop and J Pemberton who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 5th October 2024.
- ii. From Councillors Cottam, J Lunn and Steevenson who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 2nd November 2024.

b) Reports from West Berkshire District Councillors

The following reports from West Berkshire District Councillors were noted:

Councillor J Pemberton reported that a resident had recently been refused bus travel as they wished to pay by cash. Reading Buses retained the right to refuse to accept cash, if low on change for example, and having the correct cash was encouraged.

Councillor Pemberton also advised that a decision on an application to redevelop the Kennet Shopping Centre in Newbury had not yet been determined and would be considered again in December.

Councillor Jeffery reported that Crookham Hill had flooded again during recent heavy rainfall, and it was hoped that a meeting of Highways, Environment Agency, Kennet & Avon Canal Trust and relevant landowners could be convened.

c) Outside Body Reports

Reports from a number of appointees to outside bodies were noted.

Councillor J Pemberton advised that he wished to step down from his role as representative on Eco Friends West Berkshire, due to other commitments.

RESOLVED

to appoint Councillor Mark Lillycrop to replace Councillor J Pemberton as Town Council representative on Eco Friends West Berkshire.

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 20:32hrs.

Signed: _____ Date: _____