



# Thatcham Town Council

Town Clerk: Ms Mel Taylor

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## **All Members of Council**

21<sup>st</sup> January 2025

Notice is hereby given of a **meeting of Thatcham Town Council**, to be held on **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 19:00hrs** in the **Thatcham Town Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham, RG18 3HF** for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Mel Taylor  
Town Clerk

## **A G E N D A**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive from Members, in respect of any items included on the agenda for this meeting, declaration of any personal, disclosable pecuniary or other interests in line with the Town Council's Code of Conduct.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Members of public are invited to submit questions to the Town Council. All public questions must be submitted in writing by 10am on the day of the meeting, or in a case of urgency, not later than 4pm on the day of the meeting.

**4. MINUTES**

i. To take as read and confirm as accurate the Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

ii. For the Town Clerk to provide, and for Members to request, feedback on any matters from the previous meeting. Any matters discussed under this item are for noting only.



**5. REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR**

- a) To receive the Mayor's report for the period 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 to date.
- b) To receive the Deputy Mayor's report for the period 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024 to date.

**6. BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2025/26**

- i. At its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025, the Finance and General Purposes Committee reviewed the draft budget 2025/26 v0.6 and resolved to recommend most of the draft budget 2025/26 v0.6, as amended, to Full Council for adoption, with the exception of £20,000 allocated for Professional Fees (nominal code 4060/102) whilst clarity was sought on the purpose of this allocation (FGP/2025/14).

**Council is asked to consider the inclusion, exclusion or amendment of £20,000 against nominal code 4060/102 in the draft budget 2025/26 v0.6**

- ii. Subject to the above, Council is asked to consider adoption of the Budget 2025/26 and resolve that a precept of £1,179,921 be issued in accordance with the requirements of Section 150 (4) of the Local Government Act of 1974 to meet the expenditure as set out in the draft budget.  
For illustration, based upon the recommended precept, the Town Council's element of the Council Tax Band D equivalent for 2025/26 would be £125.98 per annum.
- iii. To consider increasing EMR312 – Minimum Reserve – for the financial year 2025/26, in line with the budget adopted above.  
There is no prescribed level of Minimum Reserve but between 25% to 30% of the annual precept ensures adequate provision in the event of any unforeseen occurrence which would affect cash flow.  
£220,000 is currently held in the Minimum Reserve.

		<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>2025/26 Proposed Precept</b>	£1,179,921	£294,980	£353,976
<b>2024/25 Precept</b>	£1,013,615	£253,403	£304,084
<b>2023/24 Precept</b>	£885,361	£221,340	£265,608
<b>2022/23 Precept</b>	£810,015	£202,503	£243,004

**7. APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES**

To receive and consider adoption of the following Committee Minutes:

- a) Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes dated 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
- b) Recreation and Amenities Committee Minutes dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024.
- c) Planning and Highways Committee Minutes dated 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
- d) Events Committee Minutes dated 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

**8. WEST BERKSHIRE LIBRARY SERVICE**

To consider the following request from West Berkshire Council for a financial contribution towards the library service for the financial year 2024/25:

"The library service has an annual budget shortfall of £93k to deliver the library service. In 2017 we [WBC] proposed a contribution based on £1 per parish resident - or whatever contribution parishes wished to make. The council is not delegating any part of its statutory duty to provide library services or levying a charge on parishes. Contributions are ring-fenced for the aspects of the service that are most used by your residents – for example, a particular branch library.

If you are considering contributing for this financial year, please confirm by January 31st."

**9. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

Following preparation by the Environmental Working Party, and supported by the Recreation and Amenities Committee, to consider adoption of the draft Climate Action Plan v0.5.

**10. CONSULTATION ON THE WEST BERKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2022-2039 PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS**

The West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 (LPR) is currently being independently examined by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The Inspector's role is to assess whether the LPR has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements and whether it is sound (positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy). If the Inspector concludes that the LPR is sound and meets the necessary tests, it can then be adopted by West Berkshire Council and will form the Local Plan for the District.

The Inspector issued his preliminary findings on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024, and a note on the Main Modifications consultation on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024. The findings are without prejudice to his final report but set out the Main Modifications he considers are required in order to make the LPR sound. These proposed Main Modifications are now subject to an 8-week public consultation from 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025.

It is important that any proposed Main Modifications do not undermine the sustainability process that has informed the preparation of the LPR. West Berkshire Council has therefore updated the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA), and produced an addendum to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), both of which accompany the LPR.

West Berkshire Council is inviting representations on the following documents:

- Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications to the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 (November 2024)
- Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Policies Map (November 2024)
- Updated Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Report – Proposed Main Modifications (November 2024)
- Addendum to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Proposed Main Modifications (November 2024).

All documents relating to the Consultation can be viewed at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/lpr-proposed-main-modifications>

Councillor Pike has provided an initial 'work-in-progress' proposed response to the consultation for circulation with the agenda and will prepare a final draft for consideration at the meeting.

**COUNCIL IS ASKED TO CONSIDER COUNCILLOR PIKE'S DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION**

**11. REPORTS**

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

No report as no surgeries conducted in December 2024 or January 2025.

**(b) Reports from West Berkshire District Councillors**

To receive reports from West Berkshire District Councillors.

## 11. REPORTS continued

### (c) Outside Body Reports

To receive reports from Town Council representatives to the following outside bodies:

Organisation	Representative	Organisation	Representative
Berkshire Association of Local Councils	Cllr Simon Pike	Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre	Cllr Mark Lillycrop
Dementia Friendly West Berkshire	Cllr Owen Jeffery Cllr Dave Lunn Cllr Petra Pemberton	Thatcham Parish Hall	Cllr Jeff Brooks Cllr Jeremy Cottam Cllr Simon Pike
Friends of Thatcham Library	Cllr Ben Schiffer-Harte	Thatcham Relief in Need Charity and Thatcham Parochial Charities	Cllr Mike Cole Mr Chris Druce
Greenham and Crookham Commons Commission	Cllr Simon Pike	Thatcham Support and Welfare Society	Cllr Dave Lunn
Henwick Worthy Sports Field JMC	Cllr Jeff Brooks Cllr Simon Pike Cllr Ben Schiffer-Harte	Thatcham Town Cricket Club Committee	Cllr John Boyd
Home-Start West Berkshire	Cllr Petra Pemberton	Thatcham Volunteer Bureau	Cllr Stephanie Steevenson
Kennet Leisure Centre JAC	Cllr Jay Lunn Cllr Tom McCann Cllr Ben Schiffer-Harte	Thatcham Youth	Cllr Suzanne Adamantos Cllr Ben Schiffer-Harte
Lady Frances Winchcombe's Thatcham Foundation	Cllr Owen Jeffery Cllr Ben Schiffer-Harte	The Thatcham (Old Bluecoat School) Charity	Cllr Jeremy Cottam
Eco Friends (West Berkshire)	Cllr Mark Lillycrop Cllr Tom McCann	West Berkshire Heritage Forum	Cllr Owen Jeffery
Thatcham Allotment Gardening Club	Cllr Petra Pemberton	West Berkshire Suicide Prevention Action Group	Cllr Suzanne Adamantos
Thatcham Flood Forum & Thatcham SWMP Funding Committee	Cllr Owen Jeffery Cllr Mark Lillycrop	West Berkshire Therapy Centre	Cllr Jeff Brooks Cllr Owen Jeffery Cllr Stephanie Steevenson
Thatcham Memorial Foundation	Cllr Mike Cole		

## 12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that, in view of the commercially sensitive (13) and confidential (14) nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw.

## 13. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT TENDERS

To consider a recommendation from the Grounds Maintenance Working Party and confirm award of the grounds' maintenance contract commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

## 14. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

To consider a recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (FGP/2025/16) to write off a deficit balance of £2,444.59 against cost centre 101 (approval sought in line with Financial Regulation 1.13).