

**THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a meeting of**  
**Thatcham Town Council**  
**held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at**  
**19:11hrs**  
**in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham**

Present: Councillor Suzanne Adamantos (Mayor)  
 Councillors John Boyd, Jeremy Cottam, Lee Dillon, Owen Jeffery, Mark Lillycrop,  
 Dave Lunn, Jay 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)  
 Dr. Pat Watson  
 Jamie Douglas (Response Organisation)  
 7 members of public

Prior to the formal meeting commencing, local resident, Graeme Panting, presented a painting by former resident and Thatcham stalwart, Bobbi Collins-Wootton, to the Council.

**FULL/2024/062 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeff Brooks, Mike Cole and Iain Cottingham.

**FULL/2024/063 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**FULL/2024/064 CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY EMERGENCIES**

**RESOLVED** to permit members of public to speak.

Dr Pat Watson presented on how 'We can help reduce the climate & biodiversity emergencies' and answered Members questions.

*Dr Watson was thanked for her informative presentation, and she left the meeting*

**FULL/2024/065 RESPONSE ORGANISATION – WELLBEING HUB**

Jamie Douglas, Associate Director of Children, Young People and Families at Response Organisation, presented on plans to establish Thatcham Wellbeing Hub, to 'work with children, young people and their families to help them have a healthy approach to their wellbeing and mental health, and live in a safe and supportive environment.', located at The Hub within the grounds of The Priory (Carramar House). Mr Douglas answered Members questions.

*Mr Douglas was thanked for his informative presentation, and he left the meeting*

**RESOLVED** to revoke permission for members of public to speak.

**FULL/2024/066 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No public questions had been received.

*6 members of public left the meeting*

*Councillor Dillon left the meeting*

**Full Council**  
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**FULL/2024/067 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024, having been previously circulated, be taken as read and signed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

**FULL/2024/068 REPORTS FROM MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR**

**a) Mayor's Report**

Councillor Adamantos reported that since being elected as Mayor on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024, she had attended events including: Dementia Action Week garden party, Pride Brunch, a visit to West Berkshire Therapy Centre, a classic car show, Thatcham Bowls Club open day, D-Day 80 activities at Thatcham Library, Cold Ash and Wantage Brass Bands performances, the Lord Lieutenants summer garden party, D-Day 80 services at Thatcham and Greenham Control Tower, TedFest at St Mary's Church, Francis Baily music extravaganza, launch of Family Time Centre, Drag Bingo, launch of Onebanx at Newbury Building Society, a visit to Thatcham Court Care Home, West Berkshire Volunteers Variety Show, launch of T-levels at Kennet School, Berkshire Music Trust's Senior Festival, Pride flag raising, Newbury Pride, an interview on Kennet Radio, a visit to Swings & Smiles, judging art at Kennet School, Arts Society's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, We Will Rock You at Kennet School, SwanFest at The Swan pub, a garden party hosted by local fundraisers, KATS performance of Agatha Crusty, opening of new Cricket Nets at Thatcham Town Cricket Club, Thatcham Football Club FA Cup Match, AfroFest, Henleys Allotments coffee morning, Alice Bye Court birthday, Thatcham Photographic Club barbeque, and an interview with ITV regarding the Council's Bog Standard Award.

The Mayor also attended the Town Council's Family Fun Day, KidsFest and hosted a summer garden party, as well as hosting a gathering of past Mayor's to acknowledge the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thatcham Town Council.

**b) Deputy Mayor's Report**

Councillor P Pemberton reported that since being elected as Deputy Mayor on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024, she had attended events, including: Barfield Handbell Ringers, Rural Touring Theatre performance, Elevate dance class, Carer Week information and advice session, Newbury 211 Air Cadets open evening, UCN Newbury College end of year exhibition, Project Salama coffee and chai, Heslops Chartered Accountants 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Get Berkshire Active at Thatcham Community Larder, MoveAbility at Alice Bye Court, Reptile Handling at Thatcham Youth, and Reading Pride.

**FULL/2024/069 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The following Committee Minutes were presented for adoption:

**RESOLVED** **a)** Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes dated 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024. to adopt the Minutes.

**RESOLVED** **b)** Recreation and Amenities Committee Minutes dated 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024. to adopt the Minutes.

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**FULL/2024/069 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES continued**

c) Planning and Highways Committee Minutes dated 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024, 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Minutes, noting that the meeting scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024 was not quorate and was subsequently cancelled.

d) Town Centre Committee Minutes dated 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Minutes.

e) Staff Committee Minutes dated 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the Minutes.

**FULL/2024/070 RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMITTEES**

Council considered the following recommendations from Committees:

**a) Finance and General Purposes Committee – 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024**

Following review and revision by the Committee, that the draft revised Financial Regulations be adopted (FGP/2024/28).

**RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Financial Regulations, as presented.

**b) Recreation and Amenities Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

That expenditure of £10,453, funded from Community Infrastructure Levy funds held, be approved for remedial repairs at Kennet Heath Play Area (RA/2024/36).

Work required: to excavate a ditch around the perimeter of the play park. The new ditch would replicate the existing flood alleviation ditch in terms of dimension, and would link to the existing ditch, which discharged to the nearby pond.

The Wetpour safety surface at Kennet Heath had deteriorated significantly and part of the cause of this deterioration was that the surface water run-off from the surrounding grass was running under the Wetpour. Complete renewal of the Wetpour surface would be needed in the near future, and it was recommended that alleviation of the surface water should be carried out before the costly resurfacing.

**RESOLVED** to approve expenditure of £10,453 for remedial repairs at Kennet Heath Play Area, funded from Community Infrastructure Levy receipts held.

**FULL/2024/071 FLOOD ALLEVIATION WORKS – BROWNS SPORTS FIELD**

In relation to construction of a flood alleviation scheme, by West Berkshire Council, on the northern side of Browns Sports Field, Council received the proposed compensation claim and considered creation of a dog exercise area on land north of the swale.

**RESOLVED** to defer, pending further consideration.

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**FULL/2024/072 THATCHAM TOWN CRICKET CLUB LEASE**

Having been deferred at meetings of Full Council on 25<sup>th</sup> March (FULL/2024/027) and 13<sup>th</sup> May (FULL/2024/052), Council re-considered a proposed amendment to the Heads of Terms provided to Thatcham Town Cricket Club relating to a new lease for use of Browns Sports Field, summarised as follows:

At an extraordinary meeting of Full Council on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (FULL/2024/015), Council resolved to offer Thatcham Town Cricket Club a new 50-year lease [to 2074] for use of the Browns Sports Field, with a 15-year notice period and a caveat that the primary use of the site must be for cricket. The Town Council's solicitor advised caution on providing a 15-year notice period, but it was understood that this was the condition required to satisfy an objection by Sport England to a planning application relating to the site. It subsequently came to light that, contrary to the Town Council's understanding, in correspondence between Sport England and the Planning Officer, Sport England stated that an extension to the lease should be sought, with a 15-year break-clause.

**RESOLVED** to amend the draft Heads of Terms offered to Thatcham Town Cricket Club from a 15-year notice period to a 15-year and 30-year break clause, with a 3-year notice period.

**FULL/2024/073 NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Councillor Cottam declared an interest in this and the following agenda items, as a member of the Planning Committee at West Berkshire Council and abstained from voting.

Having received confirmation from West Berkshire Council that the Designated Area had been approved, Council considered commencing preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan along with a Service Level Agreement provided by West Berkshire Council.

**RESOLVED** to (i) proceed to undertake a Neighbourhood Development Plan, (ii) to establish a Working Party to progress organisation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and that Councillors Lillycrop, P Pemberton, Pike and Watts be appointed to the Working Party, and (iii) to endorse the Service Level Agreement with West Berkshire Council.

**FULL/2024/074 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

Council considered a recommendation from Councillor Pike that the Town Council engages with developers with an interest in potential development of sites identified in the Local Plan

**RESOLVED** to support engagement with developers with an interest in potential development sites identified in the Local Plan.

**FULL/2024/075 OUTSIDE BODY REPRESENTATION**

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor D Lunn as Town Council representative to Thatcham Support & Welfare Society, following Councillor J Pemberton's request to step down due to other commitments.

**RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Pike to the Town Council representative vacancy on Thatcham Parish Hall.

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**FULL/2024/076 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 Pike and Jeffery who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024.
- ii. From Councillors Cole and Steevenson who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2024.
- iii. From Councillors J Lunn and Cottingham who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2024.
- iv. From Councillors Boyd and Cottam who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

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

The following reports from West Berkshire District Councillors were noted:

Councillor Jeffery reported that the Leader of West Berkshire Council and Portfolio Holder were meeting with schools that had been negatively impacted by the government's proposal to clawback medium/long term funds held and, going forward, twice-yearly meetings were being arranged with Head Teachers and Head of Governors.

Councillor J Pemberton reported that a waste strategy was out for consultation, and pedestrianisation of Northbrook Street, Newbury was out for pre-consultation. The proposed redevelopment of the Kennet Centre would be considered by the Western Area Planning Committee that week, and a motion requesting that the Leader of West Berkshire Council writes to the government to review its decision to withdraw the Winter Fuel Allowance was to be tabled, and efforts were being made to maximise publicity for Pension Credit.

Councillor Cottam reported that it was hoped that Kennet Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee would be convened soon.

**c) Outside Body Reports**

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

**FULL/2024/077 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED**

that, in view of the commercially sensitive nature of the business to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw.

**FULL/2024/078 ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD WALL**

**RESOLVED**

Council received an update from the Principal Building Surveyor appointed to oversee repair of the boundary wall of St Mary's Churchyard, and considered approving expenditure and the proposed tender process as set out in the report. to approve a single-tender process, due to the specialism of this project, and to approve expenditure of £58,975 funded from an earmarked reserve for this project.

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**FULL/2024/079 BROADWAY GREEN HEDGING**

Council considered replacement hedging for The Broadway Green, following removal of diseased hedging earlier in the year and the subsequent bedding planting for the summer.

**RESOLVED** to consider options for a mix of hedging and seasonal flowers and to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, Leader and Mayor to agree proposals at their monthly leadership meetings.

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 21:08hrs.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_