

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of
Thatcham Town Council
held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 7pm
remotely via video conferencing¹

Present: Councillors Steve Ardagh-Walter, John Boyd, Jeff Brooks, Mike Cole, Jeremy Cottam, Lourdes Cottam, Ellen Crumly, Richard Crumly, Lee Dillon, Owen Jeffery, Mark Lillycrop, David Lister, Simon Pike, Christine Rice, Jennifer Walker and Keith Woodhams

In attendance: Mel Taylor (Town Clerk) and Trudy Blackney (Deputy Town Clerk)
 Georgina Curtis-Read (Events & Civic Officer) (part meeting)
 Revd. David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church) (part meeting)
 Iain Cottingham (Chairman, Thatcham Town Cricket Club) (part meeting)
 1 Member of the Press (Newbury Weekly News)

Prior to the formal business, Councillors Brooks and Jeffery paid tribute to former Town Councillor and Mayor, Mr Ron Higgins, who had recently passed away, this was followed by a one-minute silence.

FULL/2021/36 ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22
 Councillor Cole called for nominations for the position of Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22. Councillor Jeffery proposed Councillor Boyd. This was seconded by Councillor E Crumly. There were no other nominations. Councillor Jeffery spoke in support of the motion.
RESOLVED unanimously that Councillor John Boyd be elected to serve as Mayor of Thatcham for the municipal year 2021/22.

Councillor Boyd took the chair

FULL/2021/37 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE AND THE TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
 Councillor Boyd read the Declaration of Acceptance of Office [to be signed and witnessed the following day], thanked Councillors for their support and spoke of his aims for the year ahead.
 Councillor Boyd announced that his two chosen charities for the year would be the National Autistic Society² and Thatcham Town Cricket Club. Iain Cottingham spoke about Thatcham Town Cricket Club.

Councillor Boyd announced that his daughter, Kellie Boyd, would be his Mayoress and that Revd. David Taylor from Thatcham Baptist Church would be his Chaplain during his year of Office.

FULL/2021/38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Field and Richard Foster.

FULL/2021/39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 There were no declarations of interest.

¹ The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

² Post meeting note: Due to closure of the local branch of the NAS, Councillor Boyd announced Swings & Smiles as nominated charity

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FULL/2021/40 VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR

Councillor Lister proposed a vote of thanks to Councillor Cole for steering the community well during a challenging period, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This was seconded by Councillor Woodhams.

RESOLVED unanimously that a vote of thanks be recorded to Councillor Cole.

FULL/2021/41 RETIRING MAYOR'S RESPONSE

Councillor Cole responded that it had been an honour to have served as Mayor for two years over an exceptionally challenging period. Councillor Cole thanked Council Officers for their dedication in supporting the community during the pandemic and their innovation, also Councillors for their support, and local clubs, charities and societies. Councillor Cole spoke of his pride to have been Mayor of such a caring and supportive community. Councillor Cole thanked Councillor Boyd for his support as Deputy Mayor and also his Mayoress, Mandy Cole.

FULL/2021/42 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22

Councillor Cole proposed Councillor Brooks as Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22. This was seconded by Councillor Dillon. There were no other nominations. Councillors Cole and Dillon spoke in support of the motion.

RESOLVED unanimously that Councillor Jeff Brooks be appointed to serve as Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22.

FULL/2021/43 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Brooks read the Declaration of Acceptance of Office [to be signed and witnessed the following day] and thanked Councillors for their support.

FULL/2021/44 LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

(a) Appointment of Leader of Thatcham Town Council 2021/22

Councillor Dillon proposed Councillor Lister as Leader of Thatcham Town Council for the municipal year 2021/22. This was seconded by Councillor Jeffery.

RESOLVED unanimously that Councillor David Lister be appointed Leader of Thatcham Town Council for the municipal year 2021/22.

(b) Appointment of Deputy Leader of Thatcham Town Council 2021/22

Councillor Dillon proposed Councillor Jeffery as Deputy Leader of Thatcham Town Council for the municipal year 2021/22. This was seconded by Councillor Brooks.

RESOLVED unanimously that Councillor Owen Jeffery be appointed Deputy Leader of Thatcham Town Council for the municipal year 2021/22.

FULL/2021/45 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No public questions had been received.

FULL/2021/46 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th March 2021, having been previously circulated, be signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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FULL/2021/47 MATTERS ARISING

FULL/2021/28 - PREPARATION FOR YEAR-END 2020/21

The Town Clerk advised that, as requested at the last meeting of Full Council on 29th March 2021, whilst reviewing the Town Council's Risk Register, a definition of the insurance cover provided under the section "libel and slander" had been provided to all Councillors via email on 26th April 2021.

At this point [at 7.41pm], Councillor Dillon called for an adjournment of the meeting until 8pm. This was seconded by Councillor Brooks and put to the vote.

RESOLVED

to adjourn the meeting until 8pm.

Councillors E & R Crumly requested that their vote against this proposal be recorded

Georgina Curtis-Read, Iain Cottingham and David Taylor left the meeting

The meeting resumed at 8pm

FULL/2021/48 REMOTE MEETINGS

a) Arrangements for Council meetings from 7th May 2021

Councillors received a report from the Town Clerk regarding expiry of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, which permitted Council's to meet remotely, on 6th May 2021 and considered arrangements for Council meetings with effect from 7th May 2021.

RESOLVED

to temporarily recreate all Committees and Sub-Committees as Working Parties, which would continue to meet remotely, and continue to be open to press and public and that the Working Parties make recommendations to be considered for approval by the Town Clerk, after consultation with the Mayor, Leader, a Committee Chairman, or at least one Councillor, as provided by Standing Order 1.2.6, and to keep this arrangement under close regular review.

b) Government Call For Evidence

Councillors were advised that Government was seeking views on the use of the current arrangements which had provided express provision for local authorities to hold meetings remotely during the coronavirus pandemic. This call for evidence sought to understand the experience of local authorities in the whole of the UK regarding remote meetings.

The consultation was open for a period of 12 weeks from 25th March 2021 [17th June 2021].

RESOLVED

to delegate authority to Councillors R Crumly, Dillon, Jeffery and Pike to prepare and submit a response, on behalf of the Town Council, to the call for evidence.

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- FULL/2021/49 RESOLVED** **STANDING COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES 2021/22**
to agree (i) Standing Committees, (ii) Sub-Committees, (iii) creation of a Town Centre Committee, (iv) Terms of Reference, (v) appointment of Members, and (vi) election of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, of Committees and Sub-Committees, for the municipal year 2021/22, as set out in appendix I to these Minutes.
- FULL/2021/50 RESOLVED** **WORKING PARTIES 2021/22 – STANDING AND TEMPORARY**
to agree (i) Standing Working Parties, (ii) Terms of Reference, (iii) appointment of Members, and (iv) election of Chairmen and appointment of Vice-Chairmen, of Working Parties that report to Full Council, for the municipal year 2021/22, as set out in appendix II to these Minutes.
- RESOLVED** Following the resolution of Minute number FULL/2021/48(a) above.
to agree (i) Temporary Working Parties, (ii) Terms of Reference, (iii) appointment of Members, and (iv) election of Chairmen and appointment of Vice-Chairmen, of Working Parties, for a limited period during the municipal year 2021/22, as set out in appendix III to these Minutes.
- FULL/2021/51 RESOLVED** **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**
to approve a calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2021/22 as set out in appendix IV to these Minutes.
- FULL/2021/52 RESOLVED** **COUNCIL SURGERY ROTA**
to agree a rota of Council Surgeries for the municipal year 2021/22 as set out in appendix V to these Minutes and to resume Council Surgery with effect from 5th June 2021, subject to, and in accordance with, government guidelines.
- FULL/2021/53 RESOLVED** **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**
to appoint Council representatives to outside bodies for the municipal year 2021/22 as set out in appendix VI to these Minutes.
- FULL/2021/54** **REPORTS FROM RETIRED MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR**
Local events had been severely affected by Coronavirus (Covid-19) with many scheduled functions being cancelled, therefore reduced activity was reported by the retired Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- a) Retired Mayor's Report**
The retired Mayor reported that, during the period 30th March 2021 to date, he had visited town centre businesses on 13th April 2021 as they re-opened from Covid-19 lockdown and had chaired the Civic Awards Panel.
- b) Retired Deputy Mayor's Report**
The retired Deputy Mayor reported that he had not attended any functions since the last meeting.

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FULL/2021/55 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

The following Committee Minutes were presented for adoption:

RESOLVED a) Recreation and Amenities Committee Minutes dated 22nd April 2021.
that the Minutes be adopted.

b) Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes dated 26th April 2021.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be adopted.

FULL/2021/56 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WEST BERKSHIRE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

Following referral from the Finance and General Purposes Committee, at its meeting on 22nd February 2021 (FGP/2021/08), Councillors considered a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel for West Berkshire Parish and Town Councils and considered the recommendations for Mayor and Councillor allowance, as set out in the report. Councillors were pleased to note that it was an independent recommendation and felt the recommended allowance covered genuine expenses incurred by the role of Councillor and also supported diversity and inclusivity.

RESOLVED to adopt and accept the recommendations but to defer implementation until the financial year 2022/23.

FULL/2021/57 REPORTS

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

No Council Surgeries had been held this year to date due to continuation of the Covid-19 lockdown.

(b) Reports from West Berkshire District Councillors

The following reports from West Berkshire District Councillors were noted:

Councillor Dillon reported that a Tree Preservation Order on “Piggy Wood” had been finalised and thanked members of public for their emails and letters of support.

Councillor Dillon also wished to thank Volker Highways, Thames Water, West Berkshire Council Officers and Portfolio Holder for their support following a recent emergency flooding issue at Dunstan Green.

(c) Reports by Town Council Appointees to Outside Bodies

Councillor Cole reported that business continued as normal for Thatcham Relief in Need and Thatcham Parochial Charities and grants continued to be made.

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 9.28pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____