

THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a meeting of
Thatcham Town Council
held on Monday 30th March 2026 at 19:00hrs
in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thatcham

Present: Councillor Petra Pemberton (Mayor)
 Councillors John Boyd, Jeff Brooks, Mike Cole, Jeremy Cottam, Iain Cottingham, Owen Jeffery, Mark Lillycrop, Dave Lunn, Jay Lunn, Tom McCann, Justin Pemberton, Simon Pike, Ben Schiffer-Harte, Stephanie Steevenson, Mark Thomas and Val Watts

In attendance: Laura Carlin (Town Clerk)
 Hayley Scard (Deputy Town Clerk)

FULL/2026/016 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Suzanne Adamantos.

FULL/2026/017 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

FULL/2026/018 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No public questions had been received.

FULL/2026/019 MINUTES

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 26th January 2026, having been previously circulated, be signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

FULL/2026/020 REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

a) Mayor's Report. The Mayor, Councillor Petra Pemberton, provided a detailed account of their public engagements since February 2026, including attending numerous community events and charity functions. The Mayor mentioned a wealth of different events including meetings at Dingley's Promise, a celebration of Plastic-Free Thatcham's Christmas sweet tub recycling effort, KATS performance of 'Cinderella', the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition at the Base, Greenham as well as two charity 'curry and a quiz' events hosted by two of her chosen charities. The Mayor also attended the High Sheriff Mock Trial Competition in Reading and was pleased to report that Trinity School won their heat.

b) Deputy Mayor's Report Councillor Lillycrop reported that from February to date, he had attended a variety of events including the Mayor's two fundraisers, a speech and flag-raising event to mark Commonwealth Day at the Thatcham Town Council offices, the opening of the Old Library in Newbury, the Newbury Town Council Civic Awards ceremony and the Pride Brunch.

FULL/2026/021 STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

i. The Risk Management Strategy 2025/26 review has not taken place within 2025/26, apologies received from Cllr Cottingham.

RESOLVED

to adopt the draft strategy with the following amendments: Remove RR06 and add more information to RR24-27 and

RESOLVED

that this strategy be reviewed by Cllr Cottingham for adoption in 2026/27.

RESOLVED

i. Financial Regulations review

that the regulations will be reviewed by the newly appointed Finance Manager in 2026/27 with recommendations to the Finance & General Purpose Committee.

FULL/2026/022 IT POLICY

The NALC template IT Policy was presented for adoption.

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FULL/2026/022 (IT POLICY Cont.)

RESOLVED unanimously not to adopt this template but to create a new draft for 2026/27 which include social media and artificial intelligence.

FULL/2026/023 BANK SIGNATORIES

RESOLVED Council reviewed the list of bank signatories and to accept Cllr Coles proposal to amend signatories as shown on Appendix I

FULL/2026/024 INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT 2025/26

Town Clerk provided an update.

FULL/2026/025 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE MINUTES

Council received and considered the following Committee Minutes for Adoption:

- RESOLVED** a) Recreation and Amenities Committee Minutes dated 23rd March 2026. to adopt, with Cllr Schiffer-Harte added to attendees.
- RESOLVED** b) Events Committee Minutes dated 2nd February 2026 to include a recommendation from the Heritage Working Party meeting on 3rd March 2026. to adopt the Events Committee minutes and Heritage working party proposal based on the amended wording to 'when the war ended'.
- RESOLVED** c) Planning and Highways Committee Minutes dated 13th January 2026, 10th February 2026 and 10th March 2026. to adopt the minutes.

FULL/2026/026 REPORTS

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

Council received and noted reports from:

- i. Councillors Jeff Brooks & Mark Thomas who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 7th February 2026
- ii. Councillors Iain Cottingham & Mike Cole who were present at Council Surgery in The Broadway on Saturday 7th March 2026

(b) Reports from West Berkshire District Councillors

The following reports from West Berkshire Councillors were noted: Councillor Brooks gave an update of the continuing financial pressures within West Berkshire Council. The Council has received approval for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) from the Government for the 2026/27 financial year to support services. Councillor Brooks also revealed plans for the commercialisation of Shaw House to maximise income. Plans include improved visitor experiences, such as a new Tudor garden, a forthcoming rose garden, and a new accessible playground, alongside new entry fees for self-guided tours.

Councillor Steevenson gave a report of Thames Valley Police's latest efforts at preventing drug dealing in Thatcham. Councillor Steevenson was pleased to report that no county lines were found in Thatcham. There have however been arrests made and they continue to protect young vulnerable persons.

(c) Outside Body Reports

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

- i. Cllr P Pemberton gave a report on the Thatcham Allotment Gardening Club, which led to her requesting for the Council to organise a 'Thatcham in Bloom' community competition with various categories such as 'best allotment plot' and 'best business or shopfront display' to encourage residents to get

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FULL/2026/026 c) i. Cont.

RESOLVED involved in helping to improve their environment. Judging to take place late Summer 2026 with winners announced in September 2026. to launch 'Thatcham in Bloom 2026' with a budget of £500.

ii. It was noted that West Berkshire Therapy Centre should no longer be considered an outside body as it is now a working party reporting to Finance and General Purposes Committee.

iii. Cllr J Lunn requested an update on the Berkshire Music Trust outside body appointment.

RESOLVED to be followed up by the Deputy Town Clerk.

**FULL/2026/027
RESOLVED**

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

FULL/2026/028

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL BINS

Committee considered a report outlining costs of taking on responsibility for West Berkshire Council litter and dog waste bins in Thatcham. Town Clerk to confirm that the report contains a complete list of all West Berkshire Council owned bins in Thatcham.

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed. The meeting ended at 20:54.

Signed: _____ Date: _____