

**THATCHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the**  
**Finance and General Purposes Committee**  
**held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 7.00pm**  
**in the Council Chamber, Brownsfield Road, Thattham**

Present: Councillor David Lister (Chairman)  
 Councillors John Boyd, Mike Cole, Jeremy Cottam, Ellen Crumly,  
 Richard Foster, Owen Jeffery and Jennifer Walker

In attendance: Mel Alexander (Town Clerk)  
 Barbara Moffat (Responsible Financial Officer)  
 Jason Collis (Edible Thattham)

**FGP/2019/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence had been received.

**FGP/2019/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Cole declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item numbers 7, 8 and 9 (FGP/2019/31, 32 and 33) as a shareholder in the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Councillor Lister declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item number 6 (FGP/2019/30) due to his employer's business with Vodafone.

**FGP/2019/27 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019, having been previously circulated, be taken as read, confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

**FGP/2019/28 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

**FGP/2019/29 EDIBLE THATCHAM**

Members received a report from the Town Clerk, providing background information on the Edible Thattham project.

**RESOLVED**

to suspend Standing Orders to allow Jason Collis to address the Committee. Mr. Collis played an introductory video which gave details of how the "Edible" schemes started.

Mr. Collis explained that Edible Thattham was struggling for volunteers to maintain the garden at Brownsfield Road. Councillor Foster explained that Greening Thattham had also struggled for volunteers, such schemes seem to work better in smaller communities or in smaller areas within the town, such as estates rather than town wide. Councillor Foster also advised that Climate Action Newbury were looking for areas to plant trees and would discuss potential support with them. Councillors also suggested other community groups that may be able to support the project.

**RESOLVED**

to reinstate Standing Orders.  
 Councillors thanked Mr. Collis for attending.

**RESOLVED**

to refer this matter to the Environmental Working Party to consider how Thattham Town Council may be able to support the project.

*Jason Collis left the meeting*

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- FGP/2019/30 WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2019-2036**  
 Members considered West Berkshire Council's draft Economic Development Strategy 2019 – 2036.
- RESOLVED** that Councillors Foster, Jeffery and Walker be appointed to review the draft Strategy and to delegate authority to Councillor Lister and the Town Clerk to formulate and submit a response to West Berkshire Council.
- FGP/2019/31 INVESTMENT WORKING PARTY**  
**RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference of the Investment Working Party, as set out below, and to appoint Councillors Cole, J Cottam, Crumly and Lister to serve on the Working Party for the municipal year.  
*To review, on a quarterly basis, (appended to meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee) where reserves should be invested to attract the best possible interest rates, providing that no more than £100,000 be invested with one financial institution and that money is invested in institutions with a credit rating of upper medium grade and above or assessed as a low credit risk.*  
*Quorum: the quorum shall be three elected Members.*
- FGP/2019/32 INVESTMENT - RESERVES**  
 Members were advised by the Responsible Financial Officer that an investment with Nationwide Building Society would mature on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019. Current balance £52,372.07.
- RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Investment Working Party to confirm a course of action upon expiry of the investment with Nationwide Building Society.
- FGP/2019/33 INVESTMENT - RESIDUAL BALANCES**  
 Members considered advice from the Responsible Financial Officer that, as there was approximately £350,000 in residual balances with NatWest, it would be prudent to transfer £200,000 to the Public Sector Deposit Fund to maximise the rate of interest received.
- RESOLVED** to approve the transfer of £200,000 from residual balances with NatWest to the Public Sector Deposit Fund.
- FGP/2019/34 THATCHAM LIBRARY**  
 Members considered a request from West Berkshire Council for a contribution of £24,480 towards Thatcham Library for the year 2019/20. Members were in support of the library service but requested clarification on how contributions were used along with more detail of the costings for the library and data on library usage by community groups etc.
- RESOLVED** to request clarification on how contributions were used along with more detail of the costings for the library and data on library usage by community groups and to invite a representative from West Berkshire Council to attend the next meeting of this Committee.
- FGP/2019/35 BUDGET / EXPENDITURE COSTS**  
**(a)** Members received details of proposed BACS and cheque payments due, from the Imprest account.
- RESOLVED** to approve the BACS and cheque payments and that Councillors Cole and Crumly be appointed to endorse the relevant documentation.

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**FGP/2019/35 BUDGET / EXPENDITURE COSTS continued**

- (b) Members received details of pre-authorised payments made from the Imprest account, Clerk's pre-payment debit card and Clerk's account during the period April 2019 to June 2019. The Town Clerk advised that a pre-payment debit card (SOLDO) was now being used in preference to Petty Cash, under the existing petty cash regulations, and was working well.

**RESOLVED** to note the pre-authorised payments.

- (c) Members reviewed the whole Council budget for the first quarter of 2019/20 (April to June 2019) along with projected income and expenditure. The Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer answered Members' questions. Councillor Jeffery requested that Council considers moving bank accounts to a bank with a branch in Thatcham.

**RESOLVED** to note the budget and to consider moving the Town Council's bank accounts to a bank with a Thatcham branch.

*Councillor Walker left the meeting*

- (d) Committee received reconciliations for all Cash and Investments accounts.

**RESOLVED** to note the reconciliations.

- (e) Committee received a report on Earmarked Reserves and CIL/s106 funds held.

**RESOLVED** to note the Earmarked Reserves and CIL/s106 report.

- (f) Committee received an annual list of suppliers paid by direct debit and authority to process card refunds for deposit returns.

**RESOLVED** to approve: (i) the annual list of suppliers paid by direct debit and (ii) authorise card refunds for deposit returns.

**FGP/2019/36 REPORTS FROM TOWN COUNCIL APPOINTEES**

The following reports from Town Council appointees to outside bodies were noted:

- **Greenham and Crookham Commons Commission**  
Councillor Foster reported that he had attended a recent meeting but had to leave early to attend a Town Council Planning and Highways Committee meeting. The Minutes were awaited.
- **Heart-Start West Berkshire**  
Councillor Foster had met the new scheme manager and he was supporting them with their new computer system.
- **Thatcham Volunteer Bureau**  
Councillor Crumly reported that she was unable to attend the AGM but was in communication.
- **Thatcham Youth**  
Councillor Lister reported that he and Councillor Walker had attended a Friday night youth club. The organisation was working to address issues with staff retention.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.18pm.

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

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