

**THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 10.30am in the Parish Council Office, New Green Centre.

In the Chair: Cllr. Dashper. Present: Cllrs. Rainbow and West. In Attendance: Mrs V Waples, Clerk.

The Chair for the meeting declared the meeting open at 10.30am thanked all for attending and the notice for the reporting at meetings of the parish council was taken as read.

1. Apologies of absence –
  - a) Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Haley due to personal circumstances.
  - b) The meeting agreed to approve the

The meeting was also informed that Cllr. Haley had submitted his resignation from this committee.
2. Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests -
  - a) To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest in items on the agenda and their nature including gifts of hospitality exceeding £25 – there were none received.
3. To approve the minutes of the Committee Meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021 as previously circulated –
  - a) 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021 - the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place with agreement forthcoming for them to be signed as such by the Chair, aif.
4. To consider the following as part of the Council's Year-End Process:
  - a) To review the Council's Financial Risk Assessment 2021-2022 – *Paper 2022/1* – the meeting reviewed the document and agreed that the risk level and associated comments with regards to Staff (work overload), Banking and CIL spend/income were appropriate. It was therefore agreed that the document was a true reflection of the financial risks facing the council and the manner in which they would be mitigated. It was understood that this was a live document and agreement was forthcoming to adopt the recommended amendments and with a review date of September 2022 to allow for the monitoring of training for staff members.
  - b) To review the Council's Risk Management Strategy 2021-2022 – *Paper 2022/2* – the meeting reviewed the Council's Risk Management Strategy for 2020-2021 and noted that amendments will be made to the document to reflect that this was a live document and that overall it provided an accurate assessment of the management of risks carried out by the Parish Council. The strategy would be updated to reflect an amendment to the reviews of the Financial Risk Assessment.
  - c) To review and agree the effectiveness of Internal Control – *Paper 2022/3* – the meeting reviewed the effectiveness of its internal control and agreed that the Internal Control Policy as proposed should be adopted with the amendment that it be reviewed after six months. It was felt that the document was an effective tool for Council to enable it to review its processes and to support the audit process.
  - d) To review the effectiveness and scope of Internal Audit – *Paper 2022/4* – the meeting reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit carried out for the previous year and found that the proposed works to be carried out for the year 2021-2022 were comprehensive, adequate and appropriate. It was confirmed that the scope of the review covered independence, competence, relationships and audit planning and all agreed that the overall structure of the internal audit was satisfactory for a Council the size of Thurston. It was to be noted that once again given the increase in income and expenditure the council would be automatically subjected to an intermediary audit by the external auditors but that this would not impact on the internal audit process or scope that would still be required.
  - e) To confirm the recommendation of the appointment of the Council's Internal Auditor – the meeting was in full agreement, having reviewed the Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Internal Audit Plan supplied, to recommend to full Council the appointment of Mr T Brown, CPFA to carry out the internal audit for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

Signed.....Chair

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022

- f) To review the Council's Reserve Policy – *Paper 2022/5* – agreement was forthcoming to try and ensure that spent general reserves are replaced over a reasonable period of time. The policy was noted and agreed by all.
  - g) To review the Council's Policies, Procedures and Protocols as per *Appendix A* – agreement was forthcoming that apart from the *Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons Policy*, there were no amendments due to any of the policies as identified at Appendix A other than changes to the review dates.
  - h) To note that there are no changes to the Strategies, Protocols and Meeting Notices (apart from annual review dates) as per Appendix B – the meeting noted the amendments and that all had been uploaded to the Council operated website.
  - i) To review and consider the terms of reference for the Recreational Facilities Committee and to agree to an amendment of the title to Recreational and Leisure Facilities Committee to accommodate additional responsibilities coming forth to the Parish Council – amendments as proposed were agreed along with the requirement for there to be six members. Given that further activities and facilities were still in the pipeline, it was agreed to set a review date for six months' time to allow the terms of reference to be amended and/or adapted to ensure that they were fit for purpose.
5. To consider matters coming forth from the Clerk
- a) Committee to note that a valid request as submitted under the FOIA is being dealt with by the Clerk – the meeting noted that the Clerk was dealing with the submitted request and that the outcome would be communicated to Council once the timescales had been adhered to.
  - b) To consider and approve the financial reimbursement to the Clerk of the holiday untaken during 2020-2021 & 2021-2022 – it was agreed that the proposal if accepted would clear the slate with regards to holiday owed from the Covid-19 lockdowns and that there would be no national impact hindering the ability for holidays to be taken in the current year moving forward. The meeting agreed that the request for the holiday to be funded in full at a maximum cost of £2,980.46 be so approved.
  - c) Powers specifically delegated to the Clerk / RFO – it was agreed that the powers so approved during 2020 be readopted with one amendment to allow conformity with Council's Financial Regulations concerning transfers within the bank accounts held by the Council.
6. To consider matters coming forth from Committee Members:
- a) Discussion followed over the requirement to appoint new Councillors to this committee prior to the Annual Council Meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk would bring forward a paper at the next meeting detailing the current breakdown for all the Committees with a request for nominations to sit on those committees for which vacancies were held with immediate effect. It was further agreed that the following numbers for membership be amended to: Planning Committee (6); Climate Awareness and Environment Committee (6); Recreational and Leisure Facilities Committee (6); Policy and Resources Committee (5) and Emergency Plan Committee (5).
7. Date of future Meetings of the Committee:
- a) Policy & Resources Committee Meeting – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 10.30am in the Parish Council Office.
8. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed:
- a) Staffing Matters – the Clerk updated the Committee on general performance over the past year and noted steps taken. It was further agreed that pay reviews pending performance be discussed further at the meeting scheduled for September 2022.
  - b) Clerk's Annual review – it was noted that this was due prior to the end of March 2022/
9. There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.35am.

Signed.....Chair

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**Appendix A – Agenda Item 4g) - policies readopted noting changes only to review dates and dates to be reviewed:**

Accident Policy and Procedures  
Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy  
Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy  
Appeals Procedure – Annexe to Complaints Policy  
Climate Awareness and Environmental Policy  
CIL Grant Awarding Policy  
Complaints Policy Procedure  
Data Protection Policy  
Disciplinary Procedure  
Disciplinary Rules  
Dispensation Policy  
Document & Electronic Data Retention Policy  
Equality and Diversity Policy  
Equal Opportunities Policy  
Flexible Working Policy  
Grant Awarding Policy  
Grievance Policy  
Holiday Policy  
Health & Safety Policy  
Information Security Incident Policy  
Internet Banking Policy  
IT and Electronic Communication Policy  
Lone Worker Policy  
Media Policy  
Playground Risk Management Policy  
Sickness and Absence Policy  
Social Media Policy  
Staff Use of Social Media Policy  
Staff Appraisal Policy  
Subject Access Request Policy  
Subject Access Request Procedure  
Training and Development Policy  
Travel and Expenses Policy  
Volunteer Policy  
Whistleblowing Policy  
Freedom of Information Policy

**Appendix B - Agenda Item 4h) - policies previously updated and uploaded to the website.**

Member / Officer Protocol 2022  
Pre-Planning Application Protocol 2022  
Public Participation in Council Meetings Protocol 2022  
Reporting at Council and Committee Meetings Protocol 2022  
Notice on Reporting at Virtual Meetings of the Council 2022  
Notice on Reporting at Meetings of the Council 2022  
Thurston Model Publication Scheme 2022  
Thurston Privacy Statement 2022  
Thurston Privacy Notice – Residents 2022  
Thurston Privacy Notice – Staff, Councillors, Contractors 2022  
Thurston Engagement Strategy 2022  
Playground Reporting Accident Procedure

Signed.....Chair

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022