

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the COUNCIL MEETING held on Wednesday 7th June 2023 commencing at 7.00pm in Thurston Community Library, Norton Road, Thurston.

Present: Cllrs. Dashper (Chair), Balaam, Bond, Cornell, Morris, Rainbow, Welham and West.

Also in attendance: County Cllr. Otton; District Cllrs. Bradbury and Davies; Mrs Waples, Parish Clerk and Mrs King, Deputy Clerk.

1. **OPENING** – the retiring Chair opened the meeting advising all that the Protocol adopted by the Parish Council for reporting at Parish Council Meetings, would be enacted for this meeting. A copy of the Protocol is available from the Clerk or can be downloaded from the website: <https://thurstonparishcouncil.uk/parish-council/policies-procedures-and-strategy/>.
2. **APOLOGIES** –
 - a) Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. Moy as he was attended training given by SALC.
 - b) **Council consented to accept the apology as submitted, aif.**
 - c) The meeting noted that Cllr. Hay was absent.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COUNCILLORS INCLUDING GIFTS OF HOSPITALITY EXCEEDING £50** –
 - a) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests; other registerable and non-registerable interests as detailed in Appendix B of the LGA Model Code of Conduct – there were none submitted.
 - b) To receive notification of gifts of hospitality exceeding £50 – there were none submitted.
 - c) To note the determination of requests for dispensations in accordance with Council’s Dispensation Policy – there were none to be reported.
4. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:** (*all as previously circulated*):
 - a) To approve the following minutes: full Council Meeting of 17th May 2023 – **approval of the minutes as previously circulated was given along with consent for the Chair to sign the minutes as a true and accurate record of the proceedings that took place, aif.**
 - b) Council to note Draft and Approved minutes of the following committees are available to view online at <https://thurstonparishcouncil.uk/parish-council/agendas-and-minutes/>: for the following Committees: Planning; Policy & Resources Committee and Leisure & Environmental Committee.
 - c) Council (as Sole Trustee) to note the circulation of the approved minutes of the April meeting of the Recreation Ground Trust Charity.
5. **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION** – the following reports were submitted: all of which can be viewed under Appendix C and D – (separate file).
 - Report from County Councillor Penny Otton – the written report was taken as read and the meeting’s attention was drawn to the following:
 - Issue with residents not applying for the benefits to which they might be entitled – SCC promoting.
 - Not suitable for HGV signs – agreed to ask for signs to be placed on Norton Road end of Church Road.
 - Ixworth Road – Director of Highways has agreed to take this up with Persimmon and chase for a resolution.
 - Report from District Cllr. Report from District Cllrs. David Bradbury and Austin Davies - the written report as submitted was taken as read and the following matters were brought to the attention of the meeting:
 - Currently holding £3million at MSDC in CIL for Thurston of which the majority of that is earmarked for Network Rail and its Capital Works.
 - Welcome interest from groups for targeted support for activities.
6. **POLICE MATTERS**
 - a) To receive a report from Stowmarket SNT on crimes relating to Thurston – no matters had been reported to the Clerk although this was being looked at. The meeting were informed that whilst an applicant had been successful in applying for the post of fully funded PCSO for Thurston, they would be required to undertake enhanced vetting which, even if fast tracked would take at least three weeks to come forth. The Clerk would

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give an update on start dates as soon as one became available. For information, the Council was given a weekly diary of the work carried out by PCSO Swain to provide clarity on the role fulfilled by the fully funded PCSO for Thurston.

- b) To consider matters for referral to Stowmarket SNT – there were no matters for referral. The meeting noted that the Clerk had requested speed checks for Stoney lane and Barrells Road (where possible) and it had been confirmed that a request had been submitted to the Speed Awareness Team for investigatory work into whether there would be suitable sites along these roads for the deployment of a VAS or SID.

7. PUBLIC FORUM –

- a) to receive matters of concern from members of the public in attendance on the agenda submitted – there were no members of the public present.

8. STATUTORY BUSINESS –

- a) To review Council’s adopted standing orders and financial regulations and delegate to the Clerk to make changes where necessary – **the meeting agreed that as there were no amendments to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, as reviewed in March 2023, it would delegate to the Clerk to make minor amendments where necessary prior to the next annual review in March 2024, aif.**
- b) To receive the review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment as carried out by the Clerk and Cllr. Rainbow – the meeting received the inventory of land and assets under the remit or ownership of the Parish Council as carried out by the Clerk and Cllr. Rainbow on 19th May 2023 and noted that there were no changes since the declared sum on 31st March 2023. All noted that the register was a live document and would be updated as and when assets or land was acquired or disposed of.
- c) To receive confirmation that the Clerk and Internal Controller have carried out a review of the council’s insurance arrangements and confirm that insurance cover is in place in respect of all insured risks including the adequacy of the Fidelity Guarantee cover – **the meeting accepted the confirmation that the Clerk and Internal Controller had reviewed the current insurance arrangements and that employers liability insurance was in place, there was an appropriate level of fidelity guarantee insurance and that all cover was risk-based and kept under constant review to make sure it adequately reflects changes in circumstances, aif.**
- d) To review the council’s and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies – **the meeting reviewed and approved the list detailing the following annual subscriptions: SALC (membership fee) and SLCC (Clerk’s and Deputy Clerk’s membership fee), aif.**

9. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO NETWORK RAIL:

- a) to receive an update from the Clerk on the feasibility study relating to the Thurston Station Level Crossing to be conducted by Network Rail – the following updates were received from the Professional Lead, Key Sites and Infrastructure which stated that on 19th May work by the Network Rail project team continues towards the completion of the feasibility study. Timescales for its completion are yet to be established but this feasibility study is actively being progressed by Network Rail and a design team is engaged. MSDC and Network Rail are in contract for the feasibility study completion on this basis. As stated in May, a site meeting (not for all but for the Network Rail design project team only) was set up on the 10th May but had to be postponed. A further meeting for the Network Rail project team only was arranged for 30th May. No confirmation has been received about whether this meeting took place and Mid Suffolk Infrastructure officers did not attend. A further update on any outcomes will be issued in the next update/meeting(see below) when these are known. In answer to Cllr. Rainbow’s email it could not be confirmed if Network Rail have carried out a footfall survey (as promised by Dan Fisk at the meeting of 23 November 22) or whether a road traffic audit and pedestrian count has been carried out (as promised by Steve Merry at the meeting of 23 November 22) but will enquire of the project team. MSDC have been offered a meeting with a Network Rail representative and the wider local group and have issued a save the date team’s meeting invitation for 28th June 2023. This meeting has not been confirmed as yet and confirmation would be issued in due course.
- b) to receive an update on the Community Action for Thurston (CATS) campaign to improve the appearance and use of the Thurston Station Building – there were no further updates from the group. Cllr. West updated the meeting that initial interest had been shown from a brewery company.

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10. FINANCE:

- a) To approve the accounts awaiting payment including those coming forth (*Paper 1 – 07.06.23*) - the items awaiting payment were verified and explanations given where appropriate. **All were in agreement to approve those items as submitted under Paper 1 for payment, as seen at Appendix B, aif.**
- b) To note the accounts paid since the last meeting (*Paper 2 – 07.06.23*) - **the meeting retrospectively approved those payments that had been made away from the meeting as detailed under Paper 2 as seen at Appendix B, aif.**
- c) To note receipts allocated since the last meeting (*Paper 3 – 07.06.23*) - Council noted the receipt of monies received as identified at Appendix B.
- d) To consider and receive the Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 31st April 2023 (*Paper 4 – 07.06.23*) - Council noted the overall bank balances of £347,110.77 (rounded) across both accounts held in the name of the Parish Council. All noted that Cllr. Rainbow would review the actual balances and sign in accordance with his role as Internal Controller. It was confirmed that the bank reconciliation audit log for April had been signed off by Cllr. Rainbow.
- e) To note the CIL report for May 2023 including nominal sums for potential CIL expenditure for the coming year (*Paper 6 – 07.06.23*) – Council noted the balance of £260,893 once the approved allocated sums of monies for CIL bids had been expended. It was shown on the report as submitted that this would drop to £216,578 once committed sums were included.
- f) To receive and approve the Internal Control for the 1st Quarter of the year 2023-2024 as carried out by Cllr. B Rainbow (*Paper 8 – 07.06.23*) – Cllr. Rainbow talked through the internal control report that had been carried out on 19th May 2023 and all were reminded to complete their Register of Interests. **The meeting agreed to receive and approve the internal control review as carried out noting that an adequate system of internal control was in place and that measures were in place to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, aif.**
- g) To note the relevant documentation for the year ending 31st March 2023 has been submitted to the external audit PKF Littlejohn - the Clerk confirmed that this was scheduled for the following week and would be submitted by the due date of 30th June 2023.
- h) To consider the request from Council's Officers to agree to an uplift on the approved CIL bid of £8,000 to install EV Charging Points at the Recreation Ground (*Paper 9 – 07.06.23*) – **Council agreed to fund the revised total of £9,308.35 from CIL to cover the increased costs including the annual costs for the first year, aif.**
- i) To receive an update on the review of total CIL collection and expenditure for the Parish and expended by MSDC – the Clerk confirmed that this was work in progress.
- j) To consider the recommendation from the LEC Meeting of 31st May 2023 to accept the quotation from Urban Forestry dated 4th May 2023 in the sum of £2,975 (Part One only) for tree works at School Road (*Paper 10 – 07.06.23*) – **Council agreed to accept the recommendation and approve the works to be carried out under Part One of the quotation in the sum of £2,975.00, aif.**
- k) To consider the recommendation from the LEC Meeting of 31st May 2023 to accept the quotation from FNCE in the sum of £710.70 for works to the fences at the play area on Heath Road (*Paper 11 – 07.06.23*) – **Council agreed to accept the recommendation to replace the fence along the south side of the play area in the sum of £710.70, aif.**

11. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO THE COMMUNITY OF THURSTON:

- a) To receive any matters relating to the partnership working with the PCC in the production of the Thurston Community Newsletter – it was confirmed that there were no issues with the overall production and distribution of the newsletter.
- b) To receive an update on the s106 works relating to Church Road to be funded by Denbury Homes (ex-Hopkins Homes) – the Clerk confirmed that she had had an update from SCC Highways which stated that the footway is being provided as part of the s278 works by the developer. The programme for construction is 7th to 18th August under a road closure. The delay in construction was partly due to the change in developer so needed to change legal documents to suit.
- c) To receive an update on matters relating to Ixworth Road – as reported by Cllr. Otton this is being progressed by SCC Highways and potentially subject to legal proceedings.

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12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

- a) To report village matters of concern to the Clerk which, if appropriate, would be actioned under delegated powers:
- Parking issues at the Library – lack of facilities especially when there are large events on.
 - Plans for Fishwick Corner - these were confirmed as being those that would involve a staggered junction and should be built out prior to development getting to slab level.
 - Village road signs project – has this been progressed? *The Clerk confirmed that discussions were ongoing with MSDC.*
 - Are there sufficient dog bins in the village? It was agreed that more detail was needed with regards to specific locations that were lacking in coverage.
 - Significant increase for traffic coming through the village avoiding the A14.
- b) To receive items for information only from parish council appointed representatives on outside bodies / groups:
- 33 Acre Project Working Group – the Clerk confirmed that she had posed a number of questions to the Chair of the Ben Wragge Charity concerning the gift of land which the Council would like to pose to the landowner. It was confirmed that the Chair of the Charity was hoping to meet with the landowners soon and would revert back to the Council. A request had been submitted for possible attendees from the Council, but this could not be confirmed until Council knew the proposed dates for the meeting.
 - Cavendish Meeting – Cllr. Morris confirmed that she would provide an update at the next meeting, but overall the Trust was in need of more Trustees
 - Library Meeting – this was scheduled for the following day - 8th June 2023 – and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

13. CLERK'S REPORT – to receive and consider information from the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and in particular:

- a) To receive the reports of items actioned under delegated powers –
- Taxi Bus Service - Elmswell to Thurston – all were advised that the trial service seemed to be operating well and was being well used – the first two runs had been completed and there were return customers who had rebooked several dates throughout the month. A breakdown of bookings for the remainder of the trial period showed: Elmswell:x5; Woolpit: x9; Beyton: x1 and Thurston: x3.
 - Bridge on Barrells Road – following comments raised by members of the public over the condition of this bridge, the Clerk confirmed that she had chased the Structures Engineer at Network Rail for reassurance that this bridge was fit for purpose and not likely to suffer significant issues given the current use which also covered the area being used as a rat run for those trying to avoid the A14 roadworks.
 - PROW – the Clerk updated the meeting with a request from the PROW Green Access Development Officer to meet with the Parish Council to discuss a number of proposed improvements with regards to Thurston's S106s and PROW funds. It was agreed that the Clerk should ascertain the dates being offered and circulate to all Councillors for attendance by those who were free.
 - Inappropriate use of Church Road by HGVs – the Clerk confirmed that she had approached Cllr. Otton for assistance with the inappropriate use of these roads by HGVs using the area as a rat run. Confirmation was forthcoming from SCC that they had contacted National Highways to request that there are additional 'Unsuitable for HGV's' signs placed out at either end of Church Road.
 - Planning Meeting – the meeting was informed that the Chair and Clerk would be attending an MS Teams Meeting with the Case Officers for DC/23/02430 and DC/23/02429 to enable them to have a better understanding of the community benefits that would arise from these applications.
- b) To receive items of correspondence for noting only – it was confirmed that all matters not warranting a response had been previously circulated to all Councillors and/or actioned by the Clerk/Deputy Clerk.

14. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS: all to take place in Thurston Community Library –

- a) Policy and Resources Committee Meeting – 21st June 2023 – commencing at 6.00pm
- b) Planning Committee Meeting – 21st June 2023 – commencing at 7.30pm
- c) Emergency Planning Committee Meeting – 28th June 2023 – commencing at 6.00pm
- d) Leisure and Environment Committee Meeting – 28th June 2023 – commencing at 6.45pm
- e) Parish Council Meeting – 5th July 2023 – commencing at 7.00pm

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15. **TO RESOLVED THAT UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISISON TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960, THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETNG DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED – all agreed that the public be excluded from the meeting as matters relating to land negotiations is likely to prejudice the position of the council in ongoing discussions if made public at this point and staffing matters are confidential**
- a) To receive a summary of the initial discussion relating to the potential change of lease terms relating to New Green – **following a verbal update, it was agreed that the PC should offer to pay the costs for any new lease agreement that would arise with the change of ownership of the land only, aif.** Following a verbal report from the Clerk, the meeting was in agreement that once more details were known, all would be advised and if their diaries allowed, acceptance would be communicated to the Clerk for onward submission.
 - b) To consider the performance reviews that have been completed on all members of staff (Confidential Paper) – the meeting noted that the Staff performances had been carried by the Chair (for the Clerk) and the Clerk as Line Manager for members of Staff. A summary of each performance review was given. **Based on the report submitted, the Council agreed to the amendments to staff contacts to be backdated to 1st April 2023, aif.**
 - c) To consider staffing matters – the meeting was informed of the resignations of the Deputy Clerk and the Senior Detached Youth Worker (effective immediately). Both of the resignations had been acknowledged and accepted with the former indicating that they would stay on and assist with any handover subject to an agreed timetable.
 - d) In light of 15c) to retrospectively approve the Policy and Resources recommendation relating to recruitment to the post covered under 15c) (Confidential Staffing Proposal) - **the meeting retrospectively approved the decision taken by the Policy and Resources Committee to commence recruitment proceedings for the Deputy Clerk position as per the revised job specification with indicative pay-scales to be in the region of LC2 (24-28) (FTE £31,099 - 34,723) dependent upon experience and qualifications. Agreement was also forthcoming to leave recruitment to the post of Senior Detached Youth Worker until later in the year - December/January, aif.**
16. **CLOSURE OF THE MEETING** – there being no other business the meeting was closed at 21.05pm.

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Appendix A - Glossary of Common Abbreviations used

Aif	All in favour
AGAR	Annual Governance and Accountability Return
APM	Annual Parish Meeting
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
BACS	Bankers Automated Clearing Services
BUAB	Built Up Area Boundary
BMSDC	Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils
CC	Credit Card
CAS	Community Action Suffolk
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Chq.	Cheque
Cllr.	Councillor
CMP	Construction Management Programme
Cttee.	Committee
DC	District Council
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DD	Direct Debit
FOI	Freedom of Information
FR	Financial Regulations
GA	Greater Anglia
GPoC	General Power of Competence
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
ILCA	Introduction to Local Council Administration
JR	Judicial Review
LAIS (from SALC)	Local Association's Information Services
LGBCE	Local Government Boundary Commission for England
LHB	Locality Highways Budget
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MSDC	Mid Suffolk District Council
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
NHS	National Health Service
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NR	Network Rail
PC	Parish Council
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
pdf	Portable Document Format
PIISG	Parish Infrastructure Investment Steering Group
PROW	Public Rights of Way
Rec.	Recreation
RFO	Responsible Financial Officer
SARS	Suffolk Accident Rescue Service
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SALC	Suffolk Association of Local Councils
SCC	Suffolk County Council
SID	Speed Indicator Device
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SNT	SaferNeighbourhood Team
SO	Standing Order
SPS	Suffolk Preservation Society
TCC	Thurston Community College
TNPSG	Thurston Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
TPS	Thurston Primary School
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
VAS	Vehicle Activated Sign
VCSE	Voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations

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Appendix B - Accounts submitted for payment

Accounts due for payment 7th June 2023	Voucher	METHOD	NETT	VAT	TOTAL
Astons Legal – fees for statutory searches	1737	BACS	1863.48	372.70	2236.18
SHO Cleaning and Maintenance – Office Cleaning May	1767	BACS	108.00	0.00	108.00
SLCC Membership Fee – Clerk	1768	BACS	291.00	0.00	291.00
Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner Funded PCSO – 01.04.22 – 18.05.23	1769	BACS	5715.17	0.00	5715.17
Suffolk.cloud Domain name and mailboxes for one year	1770	BACS	310.00	0.00	310.00
Gipping Press June Newsletter	1771	BACS	1279.00	0.00	1279.00
New Green Community Trust Biffa Bin – July to September 2023	1772	BACS	620.88	0.00	620.88
M&TJ's Village grounds maintenance	1773	BACS	1115.00	223.00	1338.00
MSDC Legal costs – protection costs and Supreme Courts cost	1774	BACS	18535.00	0.00	18535.00

Accounts paid since 1st May 2023	Voucher	METHOD	NETT	VAT	TOTAL
Salaries – May	1749- 1755	BACS	4901.07	0.00	4901.07
New Green Trust – Office Suite Rent (April 23)	1756	SO	453.67	0.00	453.67
BT – Pavilion Broadband (April – May 23)	1757	DD	33.72	6.74	40.46
O2 – Mobile Phone – May 2023 (Clerk's Phone)	1758	DD	12.90	2.58	15.48
Plusnet – Office Broadband (April – May 23)	1759	DD	29.10	5.82	34.92
O2 – Mobile Phone – May 2023 (Editor's & Office)	1760	DD	25.80	5.16	30.96
Adobe Systems Software – Acrobat Pro DC	1761	CC	16.64	3.33	19.97
Indeed Job applications - SDYW	1762	CC	150.00	0.00	150.00
Eurooffice – Stationery – Office (4)	1763	CC	191.49	38.30	229.79
MSDC – TENS Licence – June 24	1764	CC	21.00	0.00	21.00
Amazon – DYW Project – safety kits, stationary (6)	1765	CC	75.61	15.13	90.74
Amazon – laminating pouches and phone charger	1766	CC	21.15	4.24	25.39

Items paid following authorisation at meeting of 17th May 2023

Astons Legal – fees for statutory searches	1737	BACS	1863.48	372.70	2236.18
SHO Cleaning & Maintenance – Office cleaning	1738	BACS	120.00	0.00	120.00
Trevor Brown – internal audit	1739	BACS	374.65	0.00	374.65
Ashtons Legal – Allotment transfer fees – Thurston Park	1740	BACS	1554.00	301.80	1855.80
Community Heartbeat – annual support	1741	BACS	165.00	33.00	198.00
Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd – annuals software support	1742	BACS	156.28	31.25	187.53
Urban Forestry – School Road tree survey	1743	BACS	295.00	59.00	354.00
Gipping Press – May newsletter	1744	BACS	1284.00	0.00	1284.00
New Green Community Trust – increase in monthly rent – April balance only	1745	BACS	41.62	0.00	41.62
SALC – annual membership subscription	1746	BACS	1055.03	0.00	1055.03
M&TJ's – grounds maintenance	1747	BACS	835.00	167.00	1002.00
MSDC – litter and dog bin emptying	1748	BACS	1332.56	266.51	1599.07

Receipts received since 1st May 2023

	METHOD	NETT	VAT	TOTAL
Lloyds Bank – Interest	BACS	133.65	0.00	133.65
HMRC – VAT reclaim – 01.01.23 – 31.03.23	BACS	1410.22	0.00	1410.22
Newsletter adverts – renewals	BACS	427.00	0.00	427.00
New Green Community Trust – monies for 4 tower multiplay unit	BACS	16651.00	0.00	16651.00

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