

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Climate Awareness and Environment Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd February 2022 in Thurston Library at 6.30pm.

In Attendance: Cllrs. Hay, Morris, Grant and Cornell. Deputy Clerk: Mrs King

1. Election of new chair -
 - a) Cllr James Hay was voted in as the new Chair of the Climate Awareness and Environmental Committee. AIF
2. Opening -
 - a) The Chair opened the meeting advising all of the protocol of reporting at meetings adopted by the Parish Council, 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/>
 - b) The Chair welcomed Cllr Grant to the committee.
3. Apologies –
 - a) None received. It was noted that Cllr Haley has stepped down from his duties on the committee, all the work and commitments he has given was acknowledged by all.
4. Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest from councillors including gifts of hospitality exceeding £25 –
 - a) To receive declarations of pecuniary, local non-pecuniary interest(s) and personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature including gifts of hospitality exceeding £25 – there were no further declarations declared.
 - b) To receive requests for dispensations – none had been received prior to the meeting.
5. To consider and approve the notes of the previous meeting of 29th September 2021 (*all as previously circulated*) and authority given to the Chair to sign the minutes of 29th September 2021 - all agreed that the minutes as written were a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place, AIF.
6. To receive comments from the members of the public present: None received.
7. To receive an update on matters arising from the last meeting that are not on the agenda –
 - a) Groundwork East and Suffolk Climate Change: the clerk reported that the response had been very disappointing to the original survey despite promotion on the website, noticeboards and social media sites. However, the support materials will still be used to encourage households to reduce their carbon footprint particularly in current times.
 - b) School Road Gravel Pit open space, unregistered land: Legal advice on what can and can't be done and further investigation as to who actually owns it will be required before any claim to the land can be made. A similar case is being carried out by a parish in West Suffolk and will be monitored by the Clerk before any further action is recommended.
8. Items for discussion:
 - a) Footpaths: to receive comments from Pakenham Parish Council regarding the opportunity to work with Discover Suffolk Walks and Suffolk County Council – whilst Pakenham Parish Council have expressed an interest they would like to know how the paths will be linked before they make any decisions. Cllr Hay and

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Morris agreed to submit ideas for longer walks from Thurston that would incorporate Pakenham routes. These will be sent over to Pakenham for consideration.

- b) To discuss the management for the war memorial seasonal planters: Cllr Morris confirmed that the planters were in place and currently had suitable winter flowering plants. It was agreed that plants suitable for the summer months will need to be drought tolerant and able to thrive if only watered twice a week. As no plants will be available until closer to the summer season, and the current display should be fine until late Spring, it was decided that this item will be reconsidered in May.
 - c) To discuss the results of the survey regarding the BMSDC Biodiversity plans for:
 - Tree planting – a lack of confidence in ongoing tree management has meant that the general feeling towards more trees being planted was not supported by residents that surround the open spaces in Thurston. However, it was noted that the tree report submitted by Cllr Morris had been considered by BMSDC Biodiversity team and considered viable.
 - Rewilding – as with the tree planting there was a lot of doubt from residents as to the ongoing maintenance of the areas to be rewilded. Lack of support for the proposal came from concerns due to children losing their play areas, dog fouling and general untidiness. However, 2 areas that did show overwhelming support for the idea were St Peters Way and Birch Road. It was agreed that these areas would be recommended to full council for permission to submit to the biodiversity team as potential sites for rewilding. It was hoped that the successful rewilding of these areas would showcase the project, put to rest some of the maintenance issues and encourage some of the other open space areas to reconsider.
 - d) To consider a request from a resident interested in planting a tree in Thurston for the Queen's Green Canopy in Suffolk campaign (both as an individual and potentially for Thurston Brownies), and identify a potential site – the committee agreed that if a suitable site could be found then this idea should be supported. New Green Open Space was discussed as one possible site, but it was agreed that it might set a precedent for residents that wish to plant trees in memory, etc. The new primary school was also suggested and the clerk is to speak with the headmaster regarding this idea.
 - e) To consider a request from a resident who has a 12 year old Oak sapling (7' tall) and would like to transplant it from its pot to an area of open space in Thurston – concerns were raised over the health of the sapling and whether it may be pot bound. It was agreed that these concerns would be fed back to the resident, and the sapling would be inspected before any further action was taken.
 - f) To consider the idea of supplying bird boxes to interested Thurston residents to encourage village biodiversity and involvement – the council agreed this could be a project to take forward. Natural England and the RSPB all supply boxes of varying sizes and costs. It was agreed that the costs would be calculated in time for the next meeting, and if considered cost effective would be taken forward to full council for approval later in the year.
 - g) To make recommendations regarding the ivy growing on the Oak trees in School Lane Gravel Pit open space – whilst it was acknowledged that ivy was an excellent environment for small insects, it is also detrimental to the health of the tree. Cllr Morris confirmed that the Oak tree the ivy was growing up was not particularly healthy and would benefit from the ivy being removal. It was agreed that the ivy be cut at the base of the tree and allowed to die back naturally. Cllr Hay is to action.
9. The council was informed of an e-mail received from Suffolk County Council Transport Strategy Team regarding implementation of travel plans in Thurston and the opportunity to liaise with the appointed Travel Co-ordinators of the 3 developments (College Park, Cavendish View and Thurston Park) to join up their travel plans with an event to encourage sustainable transport. A teams meeting has been organised for early March and the Clerk will report back the findings of that meeting at the next Climate Awareness and Environment Committee meeting.

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10. Agenda items for discussion at the next meeting –
 - Plastics in the river blown over from building sites.
 - Great British Spring Clean.
11. Date of next meeting: March 23rd 2022, 7.00pm Thurston Library.
12. There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.47pm.