

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the MEETING held on Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 7.01pm by VIDEOCONFERENCE of Thurston Parish Council.

Present (by video): Cllrs. Dashper (Chair), Cllrs. Cornell, Haley, Hay, Morris, Rainbow, Thurlbourn, Towers, Turner and West. Also in attendance (by video): Mrs V Waples, Parish Clerk; Mrs A King, Deputy Clerk; County Cllr. Otton and District Cllrs. Richardson and Turner.

1. **OPENING** – the Chairman opened the meeting advising all that the Video Protocol 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/>
2. **APOLOGIES** –
 - a) There were no applicable apologies for absence.
3. **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 declarations declared.
 - b) To receive declarations of lobbying for planning matters on the agenda – there were none declared.
 - c) To receive requests for dispensations – none had been received prior to the meeting.
4. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:** *(all as previously circulated) and to agree that delegated authority be given to the Chair to sign the minutes outside of the meeting:*
 - a) To note and approve the minutes of the following meetings:
 - Video Conference Meeting of 3rd February 2021 - all agreed that the minutes as presented were a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place, aif.
 - Video Conference Committee Meeting of 17th February 2021 - all agreed that the minutes as presented were a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place, aif.
 - b) To note the minutes of the Planning Committee: the meeting noted the submission of the following minutes:
 - Video Conference Meeting of 6th January 2021 – Approved minutes
 - Video Conference Planning Meeting of 27th January 2021 – Approved minutes.
 - Video Conference Planning Meeting of 17th February 2021 – Draft minutes.
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 report was taken as read and the following points were drawn to the meeting’s attention:
 - Forth coming elections – people will be able to deliver leaflets and canvass abiding by regulations.
 - Woolpit Health Centre – good news regarding discussions between developers and the Parish and District Council for the expansion of the car park.
 - Locality Fund – used up most of monies.
 - Change to school transport – Norse given notice at end of contract and handed to Vertas – uncertain as to whether there will be any changes on the contract as it stands.
 The following issue was raised for Cllr. Otton’s attention:
 - Extra school transport when they return – what does this mean? Since COVID-19 they must provide enough transport for all those requiring transport all of which must be done in accordance with the social distancing guidelines.
 - Drains on Norton Road – all filled and blocked with debris. Cllr Otton will raise this with Highways along with the mud which needs clearing from the verges which have been impacted by the development to the north and east of the village.

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- Report from District Cllr. Turner was taken as read and the following points were brought to the meeting's attention:
 - Council Tax increase
 - Beyton NDP has now been distributed for comments – 8 weeks period of consultation – drop-in session 11th March.
 - Cycle path on Ixworth Road – drawings have now been shared with all and will be submitted to the LPA for formal approval.
 - Brown Waste Bins – collection to begin again from 15th March 2021.
- Report from District Cllr. Richardson was taken as read and the following points were brought to the meeting's attention:
 - MSDC - off the back of the budget have received 4m investment fund to cover the following areas: environment, housing, communities and wellbeing – working groups within the council have been set up to look at priority areas within these areas. As soon as more details are known they will be shared along with details as to how PCs and TCs can bid for some of the monies .

6. PUBLIC FORUM - due to government advice relating to public meetings, it was confirmed that the Meeting ID and Password for this meeting had been made available via the website and the parish noticeboards for those who wished to join the meeting.

- to receive questions and matters of concern from members of the public in attendance on the agenda for the evening – there were no members of the public present.
- to receive comments relating to Thurston in general – none had been submitted prior to the meeting.

7. POLICE MATTERS –

- a) To receive a report from PCSO Smith on crimes relating to Thurston – the report on policing activities for February had previously been circulated to all.
- b) To receive an update from the Clerk on the PCSO Contract effective 1st April 2021 – the clerk confirmed that she had had a meeting with Inspector Neil Mckay at Stowmarket SNT who was keen to continue to build on the excellent relationship that was already in existence and in partnership positively influence the area. A summary of the issues discussed was given which had covered attendance at PC meetings as per the SLA; staffing at Stowmarket SNT; liaison with the force itself; out of hours working (overtime); equipment for PCSO Smith and routes at the SNT disposal for dealing with ASB.
- c) Matters for referrals to PCSO Smith – Clerk to ask PCSO Smith to vary the areas in which he has his lunch break or coffee break.

8. STATUTORY BUSINESS –

- a) To review and adopt the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy 2021 – noted that this was brought back to the Council following review to NALC's LTN on Co-Option. It was confirmed that there were no matters to amend and as such the policy as written was approved for review and adoption, aif.
- b) To note the proposals by the Suffolk Pension Scheme to offer Ill-Health Insurance Cover to Employers – the meeting noted that the Pension Fund Committee (tasked with overseeing the Suffolk Pension Scheme – Local Government Pension Scheme) had recently reviewed the incidences of ill health early retirement pensions awarded to employees who are members of the Suffolk Pension Fund and the costs of those awards and having reviewed the responses were in agreement that all smaller employers will be mandated to hold ill health liability insurance. Once the criteria has been agreed this will be communicated to all employers in the Fund and the Pension Fund will then be in contact with those affected to implement the insurance. It was noted that the insurance premium is to be calculated as a percentage of each employer's payroll and the premium is deducted from the employers' contributions, netting off against the contribution rate budget allowance meaning it will not be an additional cost to you as an employer in the Fund.
- c) To consider the Clerk's Paper on preparation for future Meetings in Person effective 7th May 2021 – Council agreed to the recommendations as written.

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- d) To consider the recommendation from the Committees Meeting of 17th February 2021 to reinstate the Road Distribution Scheme – Council were broadly in support of the distribution list as circulated. All were asked to review the roads as distributed and to let the Council have any comments or amendments by the next Council Meeting on 17th March 2021.
- e) To note the Council has responded to a FOIA request for information relating to the Judicial Review being pursued by the Parish Council – the Clerk updated the Council on the response that had been submitted in terms of risk assessment; likelihood of success; costs and reasoning behind why a JR is being pursued.

9. PLANNING MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL:

- a) To receive further information on the Judicial Review submitted following the granting of Planning Permission against application DC/19/03486 Land South West Of, Beyton Road, Thurston, Suffolk as granted by Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Department – the Clerk provided the meeting with an update on the JR which confirmed that: permission had been granted for the judicial review; that as claimant the PC has been refused leave to see MSDC's Counsel's advice as it attracts legal privilege (Council's legal team have been able to ascertain the advice given based on the Council's response and a report the Clerk had sent over previously relating to a risk assessment used by MSDC in outlining the risks of refusal of a planning permission; that the PC's costs liability are capped up £10k; that the clarification of costs reserved relates to the final decision as to who is to pay any costs and will be determined after the hearing. The permission to proceed to JR also contain a Clarification of Observations and the Clerk had sought to have their impact assessed. The Council's legal team had indicated that the impact was minimal and that the judge had allowed the Council's legal team leave to counter the arguments put forward by both MSDC and Bloors. When questioned it was confirmed that the Council's Liability for costs was capped at £5,000 and that the estimate of costs for the JR was £20k. The risk assessment had been carried out on this sum and should these be exceeded then the Clerk will revert back to the Council for further approval.
- b) To receive a briefing update from BMSDC on the Joint Local Plan (January 2021) – Council noted the brief update from MSDC on the next stages of the JLP and the emerging JLP in decision making.

10. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO NETWORK RAIL:

- a) To receive an update from the Clerk on the meeting held on 10th February with Network Rail to discuss the feasibility study relating to the Thurston Station Level Crossing to be carried out by Network Rail following the granting of funds against the Infrastructure (CIL) Bid Round Five – the Clerk provided an update which indicated the timescales that had passed since the last meeting: Sept 20 – CIL monies awarded; Oct 20 – Revisions to scope undertaken and agreed; Nov 20 – change of personnel; Jan 21 – NR sponsorship resources constraints – NR is resourced at capacity; post spending review-recruitment freeze – no spare capacity; April 21 – availability is likely date for suitable sponsorship. It was confirmed that the next steps was for NR to identify and secure a suitable resource to allow the Feasibility Study to commence. Those in attendance from NR confirmed that they were committed to finding a solution.

11. FINANCIAL MATTERS - to note that all associated papers can be found at:

<https://thurstonparishcouncil.uk/parish-council/agendas-and-minutes>

- a) To approve the accounts awaiting payment including those coming forth (Paper 1 – 03.03.21) – the items awaiting payment were verified and explanations give. The meeting approved those as submitted under Paper 1, aif. All as detailed on page 814.
- b) To note the accounts paid since the last meeting (Paper 2 – 03.03.21) - the meeting retrospectively approved those payments that had been made away from the meeting as detailed under Paper 2, aif. All as detailed on page 814.
- c) To note receipts allocated since the last meeting (Paper 3 – 03.03.21) - Council noted the receipt of monies as identified on Page 814.
- d) To consider and receive the Bank Reconciliation for the period ending 28.02.2021 (Paper 4 – 03.03.21) – Council noted the overall bank balances of £207,140.10 effective 26th February 2021

assuming all written cheques prior to that date would be presented. It was noted that Cllr Rainbow had yet to verify the bank reconciliation log for January and February 2021.

- e) To consider the appointment of Mr T Brown as the Council's Internal Auditor for the year ending 31st March 2021 as recommendation by the Policy and Resources Committee – (Paper 5 – 03.03.21) – the meeting agreed to the proposal as submitted by PC to appoint Mr T Brown as the Council Internal Auditor for the year ending 31st March 2021. Council was made aware that given the level of income that the Council had received during the past year it would be subject to an Intermediary External Audit by the External Auditors and the cost would be in the region of £800.00.
- f) To note that the year-end pre-audit procedures have been carried out by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 12th February 2021 – (*minutes dated 12.01.21 P&R refer*) the meeting noted that the Committee had carried out the year-end pre-audit procedures and had no questions to raise on the matter.
- g) To receive an update on the monies held under the CIL Reserve and monies expended to date on projects identified in the Parish Infrastructure and Investment Plan (Paper 6 – 03.03.21) – the draft position was given, and it was agreed that formal identification of the level of reserves with reference to the projects identified would be agreed at the meeting in April once the final CIL Account for 2020-2021 had been produced.
- h) To receive and consider the draft allocation of Council's Reserves for the period ending 31st March 2021 (Paper 7 – 03.03.21) – it was agreed that the position of the reserves be deferred until the year-end final position was known.

12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

- a) To report village matters of concern to the Clerk.
 - Potholes – New Road.
 - Fissure around the mini roundabout – tarmac join coming apart – dangerous for bikes and motorcyclists.
 - Footpath Th No 6 – now open.
 - Thedwastre Road – potholes and verges
 - Drains – Pokeridge Corner – full of mud

13. CLERK'S REPORT - to receive the Clerks report and in particular:

- a) to receive the reports of items actioned under delegated powers – Council advised the meeting that the day to day running of the council was continuing and that in particular the following had been either addressed or flagged up to other agencies for action:
 - Pothole Thedwastre Road – confirmation that this had now been assessed by SCC Highways who had confirmed that work has been ordered to address the issue.
 - VAS –the Clerk reported that there were issues with obtaining information from the mobile phone and she was in the process of obtaining advice from Westcotec.
 - Village Guide – this had now been received and would require distribution at the earliest opportunity once guidelines allowed.
 - West Suffolk NGH Foundation Trust – request for community members to become involved in the public engagement of the redevelopment programme for West Suffolk Hospital. The project team will be establishing a Co-production Community Engagement Group (CCEG). Those wishing to join the CCEG or to find out more information, please visit the website at <https://www.wsh.nhs.uk/New-healthcare-facility/Get-involved.aspx> and complete and expression of interest form.
 - Enforcement – Hopkins Homes - the Clerk reported that following representations made, Hopkins Homes had now added mesh screening to the heras fencing along the southern boundary as required by the approved Construction Management Plan. There was unfortunately no specific requirement for acoustic fencing.
 - Enforcement on breaches of planning at Fields off Beyton Road – the meeting was made aware that following the on-site visit from the Enforcement Officer in connection with the breach of non-compliance with the two enforcement notices, the Officer was working with the

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occupier/land owner to remove the unauthorised development as identified in the notices.
Informative note: a prosecution for non-compliance with the notices does not resolve the breach as it only imposes a fine on those found guilty on the offence of non-compliance with such notices.

- Lighting on Fields off Beyton Road – the meeting noted that the Clerk will be taking a request to the Parish Council’s Planning Meeting on 17th March 2021 a request to consider whether lighting erected on the Fields off Beyton Road on mounted poles requires planning permission.
 - Footpath/cycle path route, Ixworth Road – the meeting was advised that the previously circulated plans for the cycle path route, boundary fence and new tree planting from the LPA were the same as those which were presented to the Clerk and County Cllr Otton and District Cllr Turner at the meeting held relating to the cycle path. It was confirmed that in all, 12 stumps will be removed and will be replaced with 5 Oak and 6 Field Maple. It was also confirmed that this application will not have any formal consultation and that the plans were as a result of interaction with stakeholders prior to submission. The Local Planning Authority will be supporting these plans for the cycle/path along Ixworth Road in Thurston and will be moving swiftly to issue a decision to allow for works to commence ASAP. It was expected that works will follow soon after, with priority given to the actual cycle path infrastructure to accommodate a safe means of travel between occupied homes and Thurston, which will take up to 8 weeks, followed by the erection of the new fencing for the school boundary. Planting will not take place until the next planting season in the Autumn to ensure the best chance for the new trees.
 - Facebook – it was noted that the Parish Council now had a presence on Facebook and that the Deputy Clerk is the Administrator. Once it was confirmed that the page was live, the details would be advertised. The Facebook status is for disseminating information only.
 - Thurston Newsletter – it appeared that the next edition of the newsletter would be the April edition. Anyone wanting to place articles in the newsletter on behalf of their committees should submit them to the Clerk by 12th March 2021.
- b) to receive items of correspondence for noting only – it was confirmed that all other relevant emails had been passed onto the Councillors where applicable.

14. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

- a) 17th March 2021 – Planning Committee Meeting – via Zoom – commencing at 6.00pm.
- b) 17th March 2021 – Council’s Committee Meeting – via Zoom – commencing at 7.30pm
- c) 24th March 2021 – Recreational Facilities Meeting – via Zoom – commencing at 6.00pm (*post meeting change*)
- d) 24th March 2021 — Climate Awareness and Environment Meeting – via Zoom commencing at 7.15pm
- e) 26th March 2021 – Policy & Resources Committee Meeting – via Zoom – commencing at 10.00am.
- f) 7th April 2021 – full Council Meeting – via Zoom – commencing at 7.00pm.
- g) To receive the list of dates for Council’s Full Council and Committees Meetings for 2021-22.
- h) Annual Parish Meeting – 20th May 2021 – commencing at 7.00pm in the Cavendish Hall.

15. TO RESOLVE THAT UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISISON TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960, THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED AS PUBLICITY OF THE DISCUSISON IS LIKELY TO PREJUDICE THE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED – none to be transacted.

16. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING – there being no other business the meeting was closed at 20.33.

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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
GPoC	General Power of Competence
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
JR	Judicial Review
LAIS (from SALC)	Local Association's Information Services
LGBCE	Local Government Boundary Commission for England
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MSDC	Mid Suffolk District Council
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
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
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
VAS	Vehicle Activated Sign
VCSE	Voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations

Accounts submitted for payment – 03.03.21

	Voucher	METHOD	NETT	VAT	TOTAL
Gipping Press – Thurston Information Booklet	1093	Bacs	1786.00	0.00	1786.00
Glasdon – Litter Bin for Community Shelter	1094	Bacs	310.40	62.08	372.48
SHO – Office Cleaning – February 2021	1095	Bacs	96.00	0.00	96.00
SHO – Installation of Litter Bin & Noticeboard (Office)	1096	Bacs	80.00	0.00	80.00
K Towers – reimbursement of expenses for CCTV Project	1097	Bacs	20.98	0.00	20.98
J West – reimbursement of expenses for Pavilion Project	1098	Bacs	20.75	4.15	24.90
Sac-O-Mat – Bio Dog Waste Bags	1099	Bacs	405.36	81.07	486.43

Accounts paid since 03.02.21

	Voucher	METHOD	NETT	VAT	TOTAL
New Green Trust – Office Suite Rent (February 21)	1074	SO	381.28	0.00	381.28
Plusnet – Office Mobile – (January 21)	1075	DD	6.67	1.33	8.00
Plusnet – Telephone & internet (Jan - Feb 21)	1076	DD	30.55	6.11	36.66
V Waples – Expenses	1077	BACS	12.48	2.50	14.98
Salaries – February 2021	1078-1081	BACS	3470.11	0.00	3470.11
Amazon – Wireless Keyboard and mouse	1082	CC	22.49	4.50	26.99
Amazon – Monitor	1083	CC	8.3.2	18.66	99.98
Amazon – Extension Cord	1084	CC	20.17	4.04	24.21
Amazon – Extension Lead with USB	1085	CC	15.82	3.17	18.99
Amazon – Face Masks	1086	CC	8.32	1.67	9.99
Amazon – Face Visor	1087	CC	12.49	2.50	14.99
Amazon – Prime Membership	1088	CC	7.99	0.00	7.99
Eurooffice – Stationary	1089	CC	44.81	8.96	53.77
DJ Evans – Post Box	1090	CC	55.00	11.00	66.00
Amazon – Extension Lead with USB	1091	CC	29.98	6.00	35.98
Amazon – Asus Notebook	1092	CC	533.53	116.45	649.98

Receipts received since 03.02.21

	METHOD	NETT	VAT	TOTAL	
Lloyds Bank – Interest	Interest	1.39	0.00	1.39	Year 20/21
MSDC – Cleansing Grant	Bacs	697.60	0.00	697.60	Year 20/21
HMRC – VAT reclaim Oct – Dec 20	Bacs	5870.81	0.00	5870.81	Year 20/21

Accounts submitted for payment – Library Account

	Voucher	METHOD	NETT	VAT	TOTAL
Suffolk Cloud – hosting of Friends of Thurston Library website – Fen 21 – Jan 22		Bacs	100.300	0.00	100.00