

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL – Leisure and Environment Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee held on Wednesday 18th October 2023 at 6.45pm in the Community Library, Norton Road.

In attendance: Cllr. B Rainbow (Chair), B Morris, S Pott, J West (as substitution) and G Balaam (as substitution)

Also in attendance: Mrs P Gladwell (Deputy Clerk) and Mrs V Waples (Clerk)

1. **Chair’s Welcome** - the 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. **To receive Apologies of Absence** – Verified apologies were received from Cllrs J Hay, T Welham, L Bond and P Smith The meeting was in agreement to approve the apologies received with aif. Cllr Pott extended his sincere apologies for his absence at a previous meeting due to the fact he had not realised his commitment to the committees.
3. **Declarations of pecuniary and local non-pecuniary interests:**
 - a) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other registerable interests and non-registerable interests as detailed in Appendix B of the LGA Model Code of Conduct – none received.
 - b) To note the determination of requests for dispensations in accordance with council’s Dispensation Policy – none received.
4. **To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meetings:**
 - a) Minutes of meeting of 19th July 2023 – approval of the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting that took place was given by all present, aif. The Chair signed the minutes in accordance with legislation.
 - b) Notes of inquorate meeting of 27th September 2023 - The Chair signed the notes in accordance with legislation.
5. **To receive comments from the members of the public present:**
 - a) On the agenda under discussion – None received.
 - b) On any other matters relating to recreational matters within the village of Thurston – None received.
6. **To receive and consider matters relating to the Monthly Risk Assessments Reports:**
 - a) **To receive updates on previous works highlighted in the Monthly Risk Assessments for action.**
 - Heath Road Play area: It was confirmed that the graffiti on the bin and multi play had been removed. It was confirmed that the abandoned bicycle had been removed from the hedge.
 - Thedwastre Play Park Area: No updates to receive.
 - New Green Open Space: No updates to receive.
 - Recreation Ground Play Area: No updates to receive.

To be signed by the Chair at meeting of 29th November 2023

b) To consider matters on the Monthly Risk Assessment Reports for the following and agree appropriate actions arising:

- Heath Road Play Area: Hedge needs cutting back internally and externally. Contractor will be asked to carry out this work.
- Thedwastre Play Area: Fixing hole for the bolt on double gates needs clearing. One bench has some erosion in front of it (no action at this time). Litter bin top loose.
- New Green Open Space: Sign bent on corner (no action at this time). Litter bin x 2 loose in fixing. Rotator has surface lift at centre pole. Goal nets need cable tying. Picnic bench burnt on top (no action at this time). MUGA has bent bar and weld defect.
- Recreation Ground Play Area: Nothing to report.

7. Clerks report –

- a) **Update on High Street Safari Christmas Trail** – The deputy clerk confirmed that the Christmas Trail has been ordered following full council approval. The pack is now available for publicity and posters and the next step is to agree the ten sites for the trail. It was agreed that the trail should remain similar to last year with the suggestion that additional sites to be added could include the two cafes and the butchers. It was agreed that some larger correx boards may be needed for external sites and noted that this would incur additional costs. Discussion around the inclusion of a competition similar to last year concluded that this would be a good idea and the clerk will consult with the Primary School on the theme for this.
- b) **Update on Thurston Walking Leaflet** – Following a meeting with Ben Heather from SCC Rights of Way his suggestions for amendments to the leaflet were discussed. It was agreed that the following changes be made, aif:
- The longer walk be removed from the leaflet leaving 2 walks that could be better described within the restrictions of the maximum word count.
 - The start point would be changed to New Green to take advantage of access to sustainable travel and to have toilets and refreshments available at the start and finish of the walks for visitors.
 - A short alternative route would be added adjacent to Nether Hall to allow for walkers who did not wish to cross a field containing cattle.
 - A slight variation to the path adjacent to Moat Farm to avoid the wet and boggy area and crossfield part of the path.
 - The addition of links to neighbouring parish leaflets to enable walkers to create longer routes.
- c) **Thermal Imaging** – It was noted that only four responses had been received following the newsletter article. It was agreed that this was not enough to warrant borrowing the camera and that residents interested would be given information on how to access the tests via other means.
- d) Various training opportunities open to councillors and staff were noted, SCC courses for tackling climate change and pro environmental initiatives and Suffolk Groundworks Climate change and reducing carbon footprint training courses.
- e) It was confirmed that the newsletter article promoting the bird boxes had not yet returned any responses.

8. Wildlife Garden Project –

- a) To note the Resolution of Full Council with regard to Item 11e – Paper 8 – To consider the proposal to improve the wildlife area on New Green – It was noted that approval for the project had been confirmed with delegated power given to the clerk and chair

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to issue appropriate orders to contractors and volunteers for the works proposed. Council also confirmed that they would like to see the pond liner build up completely removed rather than slashed.

- b) To consider the removal of the pond liner – One quote for the removal has been received and other contractors are to be approached to seek comparative quotes. Once these are received and best value determined removal of the liner and regrading of the area would be actioned.
- c) To formulate and put forward a proposed work schedule and list of potential working party volunteers to help with the project – The clerk confirmed a list of works and schedule and once the pond liner is removed work can start on the infill, clearing and planting. Signage and lectern prices will be sought for consideration at the next meeting.

9. **To consider the provision of benches in residential open spaces** – It was confirmed that an article had been placed in the newsletter requesting suggestions for bench sites. It was agreed that designs and costings would be considered at the next meeting following any responses received.
10. **To consider the provision of inclusive play equipment for New Green Play Area and to formulate a recommendation to Full Council for such provisioning** – Discussion took place around various options for inclusive play equipment including an integration roundabout and various tandem swing seats. Quotes from Kompan and Eibe were considered. All were in agreement that a recommendation be drafted to Full Council to provide an inclusive roundabout and double swing frame to be sited at New Green Play area, aif.
11. **To note BMSDC Trees, hedgerows and wildflowers scheme and to consider any application for free trees and hedgerow plants** – It was noted that Cllr Morris had some small leaf limes for transplant and the Gravel Pit area may be able to take additional planting however at this time no application to the BMSDC scheme was needed.
12. **Date of next meeting** – 29th November 2023 commencing at 6.00pm in the Thurston Community Library.
13. **Close of meeting** – there being no further business to transact the Chair closed the meeting at 19.40.