

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL – Leisure and Environment Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Environment Committee held on Wednesday 30th November 2022 at 6.00pm in the Community Library, Norton Road.

In attendance: Cllr. B Rainbow (Chair), S Cornell, J Hay, B Morris, J West and Mrs A King (Deputy 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** – Cllr Bond sent their apologies due to work commitments, these were accepted by all.
3. **Declarations of Interests** – there were no declarations of disclosable registrable or non-registrable interest for the agenda under discussion.
4. **To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meetings:**
 - a) 22.06.2022 – Climate Awareness and Environmental Committee: 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) 24.08.2022 - Climate Awareness and Environmental Committee: 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.
 - c) 28.09.2022 - Climate Awareness and Environmental Committee: 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.
 - d) 28.09.2022 – Recreational and Leisure Facilities Committee: 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.
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: No updates to receive.
 - Thedwastre Play Park Area: No updates to receive.
 - New Green Open Space: No updates to receive.
 - b) **To consider matters on the Monthly Risk Assessment Reports for the following and agree appropriate actions arising:**

- Heath Road Play Area: The hedge and vehicle access gate are untidy and require cutting back. The clerk confirmed that the grass cutting contractors had been contacted regarding this.
 - Thedwastre Play Area: The clerk confirmed that the new goalposts had been erected, but the graffiti paint was yet to be applied due to weather conditions.
 - New Green Open Space: Nothing to report.
- 7. To receive an update from the clerk regarding the High Street Safari AR Christmas Story trail:** The clerk confirmed that the story trail was up and running. It is hopeful that this will prove a popular event. Also noted was some of the signs had fallen off their posts. Whilst one was put down to antisocial behaviour, it was agreed that the other sign may have been due to ineffectual staples. Cllr Morris agreed to check the signs and strength the attachments where necessary.
- 8. To receive an update regarding the narrative for the footpath leaflets and establish if any draft is ready to be sent to Discover Suffolk:** Cllr Morris and Cornell confirmed that they had drafted and edited the first walk and were in the process of producing the remaining 2. The clerk is to send the first draft to Discover Suffolk and establish if the right level of input has been made, if Discover Suffolk will provide photographs, etc. The clerk will report back to Cllr Morris and Cornell initially and to the committee at the next meeting.
- 9. To discuss the management of the wildlife garden and establish a working group to take the project forward:** It was agreed that the wildlife garden required attention, in particular the pond area. Cllr Morris talked through the history of the garden and the expectations of it when it was first established. Discussions were had regarding forming a working group of willing volunteers. It was agreed that the clerk would make contact with Thurston 6th Form college to enquire if they run a Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, Leadership groups, Environmental Studies course to see if there could be an opportunity to join forces. Also discussed was contact to be made with Thurston Gardening Club and former volunteers who were involved in the original project. The clerk will report back at the next meeting.
- 10. To review and discuss the proposed Leisure and Environment Committee 0-3 year goals:**
- Footpath leaflets: no amendments to be made to the action steps, but the expected completion date was pushed back to Spring 2023.
 - Rewilding of public open spaces: no amendments to be made, agreed to monitor and review in 2024.
 - Bug Hotel: the committee were keen to involve the primary school in this project, an area of the wildlife garden could be reserved for this, with children keeping records of the different species identified. The clerk is to contact Mr Baynes and report back.
 - Bird boxes: the committee were keen to move forward with this project – Thurston Spring Watch 2023 was suggested. The committee agreed that the initial investment should be for a relatively small number of bird boxes, for example 50, to establish the level of interest this might generate. If it proved to be popular, it could be carried out annually with the range of bird species

recorded to see if it changes over the years. The clerk is to contact RSPB for an accurate cost and initiate a CIL bid for the funds.

- Recreation Ground electric charging points: the clerk confirmed that quotes had been sourced from 6 suppliers. Currently only one supplier had provided a full quote. The clerk is to chase the remainder and initiate a CIL bid when everything is in place.
- Ethos report review: the clerk confirmed that the public open space on the Persimmon site was not expected to be ready until Feb/March and would update thereafter.

Cllr Morris agreed to walk through the Hopkins site to view the work being made to date.

- Thermal Imaging camera project: the clerk confirmed that the camera would be available in Thurston from Feb 20th to March 21st. The opportunity has been advertised in the Newsletter with some uptake. A more sustained information campaign would be carried out closer the date. Cllrs were advised that they would be required to volunteer to carry out the surveys.
- Wildlife garden: see item 9.
- School Road gravel pit: whilst it has been confirmed that the area is owned by the parish council it was noted that Mid Suffolk still maintain it. Cllr Morris highlighted concerns over the ivy covering one of the Oak trees and Cllr Hay agreed to attend to it as Tree Warden and sever the ivy roots at the base of the tree.
- Review the network of shared-use routes linking key movement routes (fig 14, page 81 TNP): Cllr Morris is to walk the new footpath created by the Hopkins site, and report back at the next meeting. The Clerk confirmed that the expected upgrade of Footpath TH18 has not been carried out and talks were ongoing with Persimmon regarding this breach of their planning conditions.
- Linden Homes phase 2 recreation plans: the following expectations were agreed:
 - Lady Green Wood would have full public access
 - The council would be informed who will manage the trees, when the annual tree surveys are carried out and what the tree survey findings are.
 - A structured footpath/boardwalk trail would meander through the forest, with seating available. It would be sympathetic to its surroundings, and similar in style to the boardwalk at Ickworth House woods.
 - The play area would incorporate equipment for ALL ages and would be located close to the houses for security purposes.
 - Thurston Stream Valley Copse is located to the rear of Lady Green Wood and abuts the Linden site, the developers need to be mindful of this priority habitat woodland that is a valuable wildlife habitat.
 - Cllr Morris, West, Rainbow and Hays all put their names forward to be part of the PC liaison team.
- Heath Road refurbishment: whilst it was noted that the play area is in need of complete refurbishment the committee was conflicted in their approach to the ultimate outcome. It was agreed that a meeting would be held with the TINC in the new year, when it is expected that they would be in a better position to decide on the future of Heath Road open space.
- Recreation Ground/Pavilion: it was agreed that the play area should be upgraded, but until the future of the football club is better known this would not be a cost-effective project. The pavilion lighting has been upgraded to make it more cost

effective and environmentally friendly. A similar solution is being sort for the heating.

- Thedwastre play area: quotes for the matting had been received. The annual inspection report had still not been made available, and the committee agreed to wait for the report before making an informed decision regarding the resurfacing.
- New Green Open Space: no amendments to be made, agree to monitor and review.
- Reduce carbon footprint within the village: no amendment to be made, agree to monitor and review regularly.

11. Date of next meeting – 25th January 2022 commencing at 6pm in the Thurston Community Library.

12. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the Meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted – The quotes for the matting were received and discussed. It was resolved any decision would be deferred until the annual playground inspection report had been received.

13. Close of meeting – there being no further business to transact the Chair closed the meeting at 19.49