

Minutes of the Thorverton Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday January 12th 2021, 7pm, by way of the on-line facility 'Zoom' (Coronavirus Act 2020)

Present: Cllrs S Crang, S Fice, A Foster (Vice Chair), J Hodge, N Lane (Chair), A McKee, T Sanders, G Sims, D Waldron and K Wells. **In attendance:** Mrs A Marshall (Clerk), D/Cllr Deed and 1 member of the public.

Standing Orders suspended.

Public Open Session: None.

External Reports:

i) County Councillor Margaret Squires had submitted a Covid update which can be found on the Devon County Council (DCC) website.

ii) District Councillor Bob Deed reported that budget discussions at Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) were ongoing. The aim is to lower the current £3 million deficit to a more manageable £490,000 for the coming financial year, to avoid having to use reserves. The reduction in available funds will result in some services not being delivered at the current level. The report for the Electoral Review for Mid Devon has been finalised, resulting in no change to Silverton parish. Cadbury Ward, which includes Thorverton, will be joined with Stockleigh Pomeroy from 2023. The changes have been made in order to level up the number of electors for each Councillor to 1660 on average by 2026. On refuse collection D/Cllr Deed confirmed that the collection days remain unchanged for 2021 and that the calendar usually received by post can now be found on the MDDC website. By not posting out these calendars this year a substantial sum of money has been saved. The dates also appear in the Focus magazine.

iii) Police statistics – one crime of anti-social behaviour had been reported in Thorverton in November.

Standing Orders resumed.

20/132 Declarations of interest regarding items on the agenda: None.

20/133 Apologies for absence: C/Cllr Squires – technical difficulties.

20/134 Confirmation of Minutes of 8th December 2020: It was RESOLVED to sign the document as a correct record.

20/135 Action Plan updates: i) Tool storage for the car park (see item 20/139 below) – the Chairman suggested that the County Surveyor had warned against adding a building to the end of the row of garages some years ago, due to the bank and wall being unstable. Cllr Hodge clarified the position by saying that no excavation of the bank would be required to accommodate the proposed new tool store. ii) New Defibrillator – the order for the second machine had been placed, the monies had been transferred to the Parish Council's bank account and the invoice had been received for payment. A local electrician had kindly agreed to install the machine at no cost.

20/136 School Lane/Bullen Street junction: A negative response had been received from DCC Highways following the Parish Council's request for a mirror at the junction and no alternative had been suggested. Further correspondence from residents of School Lane in favour of a mirror had been received and was considered. Following discussion it was RESOLVED to take the matter forward by writing direct to DCC Highways, and the DCC Health and Safety Officer, explaining the concerns and with focus on School safety. The correspondence would also request alternative solutions to the issue, should recommendations for a mirror not be forthcoming, and that consideration to warning signs in Bullen Street, on the approach to the School Lane junction, be given. Cllrs McKee, Waldron and Sanders would support with the correspondence and C/Cllr Squires would be copied in. Cllr McKee volunteered to contact the School for input.

20/137 Planning Matters:

i) 20/02000/HOUSE erection of a 3 bay garage following removal of existing garage at Orchard House, Thorverton. Following discussion it was RESOLVED to object to this application on the grounds of the large size of the proposed building, as it would be visible from the road and as the materials do not appear to be in keeping with the character of the surrounding residential buildings.

ii) 20/02053/FULL installation of 4 antennas 335x227mm externally within the castellation of the tower on each elevation, 1 GPS antenna behind the parapet and 1 electrical meter cabinet next to the north elevation of the Church

and ancillary development at St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Thorverton. Following discussion it was RESOLVED to support this application which, it is hoped, would lead to improved mobile phone reception in the area if granted.

iii) **20/02083/HOUSE** erection of a rear dormer and loft extension at Rydal Cottage, Thorverton. Following discussion it was RESOLVED to object to this application on the grounds of the large size and as the style was not in keeping with the character of the local area.

iv) **20/02072/FULL** erection of 2 dwellings with access and associated works following demolition of agricultural buildings at Lodge Farm, Thorverton (listed as Brampford Speke). Following discussion it was RESOLVED to submit a neutral observation stating that it would set an important precedent should MDDC approve this application.

v) **20/01356/FULL Approval** to removal of condition 5 of planning permission 07/00886/FULL to allow annex as separate dwelling at Lee Cross Farm, Thorverton.

vi) **20/01890/FULL Refusal** of agricultural storage and retention of access track and hard standing at the rear of 9 Silver Street, Thorverton.

20/138 Mobile Phone Reception: It was noted that if planning application 20/0253/FULL (see above) was granted by MDDC, local mobile phone reception could improve. It was, therefore, agreed not to take any further action at this time and to await the outcome of the planning application.

20/139 Handyman: No request for payment received due to no work being completed in December. No additional duties were added to the duty list although the planting of bulbs around the village could be added next month following the Chairman's explorations. It was RESOLVED to keep the outside gym equipment in the Recreation Ground open, along with the play equipment, as this appeared to meet the current Covid lockdown recommendations supplied by Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC).

Purchase of a gritter - following the adoption of the Snow Plan last month one further volunteer had been recruited to help grit the roads. Salt/grit bins had been topped up by the Handyman and sufficient supplies were confirmed. It was RESOLVED to purchase a hand pull salt/grit gritter up to £250 which the Clerk would oversee.

Storage container for Handyman tools - Cllr Hodge reported that the proposed car park site had been cleared and that a 15 foot container would fit the space. A concrete base may be required. The Handyman was investigating container availability and costs were anticipated to be £2500 - £3000 overall. Planning permission would be required at a cost of £120. It was suggested that an electric car charging point could be included with the planning application and for future use. It was agreed to review the matter further at the next meeting.

D/Cllr Deed left the meeting at this point and Cllr Wells left the meeting during the next item.

20/140 Budget and Precept: The Chairman explained the important annual process of setting the budget and precept demand for the next financial year (01/04/21-31/03/22). The budget document prepared by the Clerk was thoroughly reviewed and, following slight amendment, it was RESOLVED to adopt the budget and submit a precept demand to MDDC of £17,912. This figure is an increase on last year of £2,173. due to the addition of funding for the repairs to the village water course, the purchase of a permanent tool store, an increase in grant funding availability to local organisations, an increase in administration costs and also due to the uncertainty of any available grant funding being received. The increase represents a rise in the region of 15%, or £6 per year, per Band D household for local Council Tax purposes.

20/141 Finances:

i) **Bank balance** – it was noted that the bank balance on 1st January 2021 was £64,686.97

ii) **Banked receipts** – receipts for December were noted as being bank interest £0.43p, Allotment rents £20.00.

iii) **Payments** – it was RESOLVED to make the following payments, Cllrs Lane and Sims to oversee the transactions:

A Marshall - Clerk salary	Salary £516.36 gross, less tax due	£512.36 net
Countryside Tree Services	Jubilee Green tree and stump removal	£90.00 (VAT n/a)
A Marshall - expenses	HP instant ink £9.99 and Christmas Cards	£14.49 (incl VAT)
Citizens Advice	Donation as agreed (and paid) December 2020	£400.00 (VAT n/a)

MDDC	Garage rental – monthly direct debit	£55.68 (incl VAT)
Additional payments:		
AC Archaeology	Community Dig final invoice (as per quote)	£13,440.00 (incl Vat)
St John Ambulance	New Defibrillator and accessories	£1,746.00 (incl VAT)

iv) Additional Payments: It was further RESOLVED to make the payment to AC Archaeology, due to the invoice being the same as the quote and as agreed prior to the start of the Community Dig in 2020, and the payment to St John Ambulance, in accordance with the resolution made in October 2020, for the new Defibrillator.

20/142 Recreation Ground: Cllr Sims responded to comments about dog mess in the Rec by saying that it was likely to be badger or fox mess, as both animals had been seen in the area. It was confirmed that ‘no dog’ signs were clearly visible on every entrance to the site.

20/143 Representative reports:

i) Footpaths – Cllr Foster called for a working group to be put together with the aim of reporting to Council on how best to take forward the Definitive Map Review. It was RESOLVED that Cllrs Foster, Sanders and Waldron would take this on and report back to Council at the February meeting.

ii) Raddon Group – the Chairman asked for any suggestions that he could put forward for the next Raddon Group meeting agenda and it was agreed to submit the matter of the Definitive Map Review process.

iii) Allotments – Cllr Fice provided an update and confirmed that the Clerk was in the process of dealing with the annual renewals and that, to date, one plot had been given up. Following discussion, and due to three residents being on the allotment waiting list currently, it was RESOLVED that the Allotment Agreement should be upheld and that any allotment tenant not living in Thorverton (or Cadbury) at the time of the annual renewal (1st January) would not be able to renew their tenancy. Also, any tenant found to be sub-letting their allotment would not have their tenancy renewed. One untidy plot had been identified and due to there being no formal process by which to deal with such matters it was RESOLVED to send a letter to the tenant allowing three months’ notice to tidy up the plot or risk termination of the tenancy. It was agreed that Cllr Fice, with the Clerk, should review the existing allotment agreement and present any suggested amendments to Council for consideration at a future meeting.

vi) Millennium Green – all present were pleased to hear that the grant funding application to Viridor Credits for a new mower had been successful. The Parish Council was thanked for its support. The public were warned about the very muddy paths and were reminded to pick up after their dogs.

20/144 Royal British Legion: It was RESOLVED to donate £100 to the RBL funds in acknowledgement of the work carried out at Jubilee Green during 2020. A thank you letter had been sent. Cllrs Hodge and Fice declared an interest and did not vote, due to being associated with the RBL.

20/145 Mid Devon Mobility: Following a request for grant funding it was RESOLVED to grant £200 to this cause in acknowledgement of the continued support and service provided to local residents over the past year.

20/146 Correspondence:

i) Planning Application 20/01890/FULL – persistent emails had been received from a resident with regards to comments made by the Parish Council on this planning application. It was RESOLVED not to take the matter further.

ii) Thorverton Memorial Hall / Christmas trees – a thank you letter had been received from the Hall Committee with regards to the purchase of the Christmas trees. The Chairman thanked Cllr Fice for organising the purchase and collection of both trees and the erection, decoration and, more recently, the dismantling of the Jubilee Green tree. Cllr Fice was also thanked for overseeing the wonderful light display on the Jubilee Green which had attracted many positive comments from residents over the festive season.

iii) Devon Carbon Plan Consultation – it was RESOLVED not to respond to this document.

iv) Icy village roads – an email had been received from a resident concerned about icy village roads, asking the Parish Council to act to avoid serious accidents. It was confirmed that the recently adopted Snow Plan covered both snow and ice and that the Handyman was now checking weather alerts in order that gritting could take place as required.

v) Blocked dam – an email had been received from a resident advising that the dam feeding the village water leats was blocked, resulting in the water supply ceasing. The Clerk had advised the landowner. Cllr Crang reported that the dam was in need of significant work in order to return the water to the leats. The Parish Council had set aside funds within its budget in order to contribute towards the cost of the required work and the Clerk would first confirm that such a contribution was in order, prior to any funds being spent, by contacting DALC.

20/147 Responding to correspondence: It was agreed to postpone this item until a future meeting.

20/148 South West Water/Quarry Car Park moving of apparatus/compensation claim: Cllr Crang reported that SWW were now considering relocating the apparatus from the car park to the Lynch Road area, although nothing had been decided as yet. It was now certain that the equipment would be moved from the car park.

20/149 Hulk Lane permissive/public bridleway: In 2020 it had been resolved not to close the matter of perusing a public bridleway along Hulk Lane. It now appeared that the lane was a mix of public and permissive bridleways and concerns about the permissive part possibly being withdrawn by the landowner sometime in the future remained. The Parish Council had given grant funding to this project on the understanding that the bridleway would be public, and so open to the public in perpetuity, but this had not turned out to be the case. Communications with DCC Highways in this respect had been fruitless. The Chairman asked Council how it wished to take the matter forward and, following discussion, it was RESOLVED that ‘Hulk Lane Bridleway’ be closed as a ‘minute’ and that the matter be transferred to the new Definitive Map Review Working Group to take forward. It was confirmed that DCC Highways remained responsible for maintaining the lane/bridleways.

20/150 New Cemetery: A quote had been received from a local architect with regards to overseeing the new Cemetery planning permission. Following a review of the Council’s rules and regulations it was RESOLVED that two further quotes should be obtained prior to the way forward being agreed.

20/151 Speeding traffic: It was agreed to postpone this item until the February meeting and to merge it with the request for a School Lane safety mirror matter.

20/152 Satisfaction Survey Results/Aims of the Parish Council: The Working Group of Cllrs Wells, McKee and Sanders had reviewed both documents and had produced and circulated a report for Council for consideration. Following discussion it was RESOLVED that any further comments should be sent to Cllr Sanders by next Monday in order that the report, providing feedback on the Satisfaction Survey results and comments on the Aims of the Parish Council document, could be finalised and published.

20/153 Business at the Chairman’s discretion:

i) Zoom facility – the Council’s Zoom agreement appeared to allow for the sharing of the on-line meeting facility with local organisations although the Chairman, as facilitator of the agreement, would need to set up and start the meeting. Any local organisations interested in using this facility should contact the Chairman or Clerk.

20/154 Next meeting: February 9th 2021, 7pm, by Zoom.
The meeting closed at 21.35

CHAIRMAN 09/02/2021