

**DRAFT**

**Thorverton Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Thorverton Parish Council meeting held at 7:00pm  
on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022, at Thorverton Memorial Hall**

**Present: Cllrs A Foster (Chairman)**

**S Crang,**

**J Hodge,**

**N Lane,**

**C Marshall,**

**A Price,**

**T Sanders**

**G Sims**

**B Uglow**

**County Cllr M Squires and District Cllr B Deed**

**In attendance:** J P Roberts (Clerk & RFO) and 1 member of the public.

**21/152 Public Open Session**

A member of the public raised more criticisms of the Council, particularly one Cllr, the Chairman and the clerk. He said that the clerk was antagonistic, verbally aggressive, shouting, intimidatory and was clearly trying to influence and undermine his complaint despite having no formal qualifications for his position and only 2 years' experience with a very small Parish council. The member of the public said that the clerk's opinions were clearly wrong, misconceived, and inaccurate and he advised the clerk that less sarcasm and a more polite attitude will go a long way should he wish to be successful in his new position.

The member of the public then asked the Chairman some questions which were answered. He went on to outline where the Council had erred when dealing with an enquiry from a parishioner and referred to the letter from the Monitoring Officer at MDDC.

The member of the public called for a vote of no confidence in one of the Parish Cllrs and advised that he would be resubmitting his complaint to the Monitoring Officer.

**21/153 Election of Vice-Chair**

Cllr Price was nominated and seconded as a candidate for Vice-Chairman. As there were no other names put forward the Council unanimously elected Cllr Price as Vice-Chairman who then signed his Declaration of Office.

**21/154 External Reports**

i) C/Cllr Squires was thanked for submitting her written report in advance (see appendix A below). She emphasised that the project to introduce a blanket 20mph across the town in Newton Abbot was rejected by the residents and the zones would only be introduced outside schools.

She encouraged everyone to use the online Report-a-Problem webpage to report potholes and other highway defects.

ii) D/Cllr Deed was also thanked for submitting a written report (see appendix B below) and he sympathised with the Chairman's long agenda. He gave some additional details on the Parish Review and encouraged the Council to comment.

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iii) The Council noted that the crimes reported for the most recent month for which figures are available (December 2021) were 2 under 'other theft' in Silver Street and Watery Lane and 2 under 'Violence and Sexual offence' at Watery Lane.

### 21/155 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

### 21/156 **Apologies**

None.

### 21/157 **Confirmation of minutes**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January as a true & correct record. The Chair duly signed them.

### 21/158 **Outstanding resolutions**

- 6.1 **Legal Services**
- 6.2 **Hulk Lane Bridleway**
- 6.3 **Purchase of the allotment field**
- 6.4 **Parish Plan /Neighbourhood Plan**
- 6.5 **New Cemetery**
- 6.6 **20 is Plenty**

These items will be removed from the agenda and Cllrs will raise issues for the agenda in advance.

*[Cllr Deed left the meeting at 7:37pm]*

### 21/159 **Traffic Issues**

- i) **Speedwatch** Council noted the figures from the 5 Speedwatch sessions which had recorded 9, 7, 11, 6, 4, 3 vehicles over the limit with 46mph the fastest speed recorded. The Chair will ask for more volunteers in his Focus article.
- ii) **20 is Plenty** Council **RESOLVED** to ask DCC for a 20mph zone in Thorverton. The Chair would map out the zone as Council had agreed and send to the clerk to process.
- iii) **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points** Council identified that charging points will be essential if Thorverton was going to become carbon-neutral. They further identified that a 3-phase electricity supply was needed for fast charging, there was some significant expertise in the village and grants of 50-75% could be available. Using the proposed new leaflet and Focus the demand for points will be evaluated.

### 21/160 **Satisfaction Survey**

- i) Unfortunately Focus did not print the results of the survey, only the commentary. The results will be printed in next month's edition.
- ii) To address the concerns expressed in the Survey the Council discussed how to improve communication with the community. This built on the suggestion from the Vice-Chair of a leaflet explaining the role and activities of the Council. The Chair offered to fund the development of the artwork once the whole Council was happy with the content.

The Council **RESOLVED**

- a) that the leaflet would be developed by the Chair, V/Chair and Cllr Sanders including a form to research EV interest,
- b) that the clerk will liaise with the former Cllr McKee and former Clerk to establish use of Facebook, NextDoor & Thorverton Community Group,

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- c) that attendance by Cllrs would be put on the agenda,
- d) that Cllr profiles on the website would be brought up-to-date.

### 21/161 Allotments

Council **RESOLVED**

- a) that plots 11 and 29 would cost money to bring back into shape and therefore the deposits would be forfeit by the allotment holders who were giving them up,
- b) that plot 18 and 20 were in good condition and the deposits to the retiring allotment holders should be returned in full (should plot 20 be given up as that is held by a resident from a neighbouring Parish & the end of the tenancy depends on demand from Thorvertonians),
- c) that the clerk would hold a continuous waiting list, supplemented with additional advertising when plots were vacated as required.

### 21/162 Highways

- i) **School Lane junction safety** The V/Chair will liaise with former Cllr McKee re. contact with the school to consider moving the junction.
  - ii) **Raddon directional sign** C/Cllr Squires believes that the sign will be replaced. The Council hopes that a heritage sign could be funded showing Raddon & Berrysbridge and would consider paying the additional cost above that of a normal Highways sign.
  - iii) **Pavement o/s shop** No update. Reported to DCC 19 Nov and repaired as tarmac (not cobbles) – still awaiting specialist repair.
  - iv) **Highways Repairs** The priority list for road works and the road condition scores had still not been provided. The clerk will ask the Neighbourhood Highways Officer if this can be provided as promised at the Highways Conference in November 2021.
  - v) **Dark Lane signage** Reported to Steve Tucker 19 Nov. No update. C/Cllr Squires did not know who to lobby for 'Don't follow Satnavs' signs as these weren't erected by Highways. A similar issue arises in Jericho St with deliveries. The Council will consider writing to the MP at the next meeting.
  - vi) **30mph sign at Broadlands** This will be solved if the Parish is successful with the 20mph zone bid.
- [C/Cllr Squires left the meeting at 8:50pm]*

### 21/163 Planning

#### i) Applications

Council **RESOLVED** to make no comment on the following two applications:

- a) **22/00128/FUL** Erection of 2 stables at Land at NGR 291455 100467 (The Tallet Barn) Heathfield
- b) **22/00302/HOUSE** Erection of single storey side extension following removal of existing extension at Hannabusses Thorverton Exeter

Council noted the decision to **approve 21/02444/FULL** (Erection of a dwelling and associated parking (Revised scheme) at the land and Buildings at NGR 292 10212 Off Jericho Street Thorverton) and that application **21/02434/HOU** (Erection of a garage block & workshop with accommodation above at Pleasure House) had been **withdrawn**.

*[The sole member of the public left at 9:05pm]*

#### ii) Consultations

The Council **RESOLVED** that

- a) the following comments would be submitted to the **MDDC Parish Review**:  
Thorverton Parish Council can see no benefit in reducing the no of Cllrs as there will be no savings made as there are no costs involved.

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TPC has, in recent electoral cycles, found no difficulty in finding 10 or more willing candidates.

The Parish Boundary for Thorverton seems broadly correct as we share little in common with the adjacent Parishes and already have full agenda with many projects ongoing.

The current number of Cllrs (10) helps to spread the load of these projects and makes for good progress with working parties,

- b) that Cllrs would bring comments for the **Plan Mid-Devon** consultation to the next meeting,
- c) that there were no comments to be made on the **Cranbrook Plan: Proposed Main Modification** consultation.

### 21/164 Handyman

Work for this month:

- i) Start grass cutting end of this month, wherever the grass is long but being aware of damaging bulbs (Cllr Marshall will advise).
- ii) Cllr Marshall will advise on the disposal of the ivy cut down at Dark Lane.
- iii) Silver St footpath needs clearing from Court Barton to Station Hill but this may well be a DCC responsibility. This will be checked before the handyman is used.

### 21/165 Recreation Ground

- i) There has been no recreation ground financial activity this month.
- ii) Cllr Sims and the V/Chair advised the Council on available equipment and good sources of funding that may be available. Council recognised the need to keep sum funds back for maintenance (approx. £1000) leaving approx. £5000 for purchasing equipment. Cllr Sims and the V/Chair will liaise with the clerk about the process of selecting equipment.

### 21/166 Councillor Vacancy and Feedback from Leavers

The legal notification of the vacancy has been posted and MDDC will confirm if an election has been called in early March. The vacancy will be part of the report in Focus and the Chair will keep the person already interested informed of the timescales and process.

The clerk will send a leaver's form to former Cllr McKee.

*[Cllr Crang left at 10:07pm]*

### 21/167 Finance and Payments

- i) Council noted that as at 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022 the bank balance stood at £ 59,736.92
- ii) Council noted the receipts since January's meeting as £60 allotment rents and £0.31 interest.
- iii) Council **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:
  - a) MDDC Garage rental (monthly DD) £ 55.72 (incl VAT)
  - b) Invoice from Ben Fitch for 3 hours work in January £ 45.00
  - c) MDDC Play Area inspection £ 72.00
- iv) **Grants** - The Council **RESOLVED** to pay the Queen's Jubilee Street Party Committee £330. The Thorverton through Time project grant application would be circulated to all Cllrs and the Grant Giving Working Group would review and advise for the next meeting.
- v) The Council **RESOLVED** to honour the previous clerk's contract for 9 hours per week up to the last day. The clerk will calculate what payment is due including any holiday pay.

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**21/168 Existing Projects:**

**i) New Cemetery** - Council asked the clerk to instruct contact the landowner and begin the purchase proceedings.

**ii) Jubilee Green and Barliabins**

Cllrs Marshall, Sanders & Uglow advised the meeting that they had met contractors and been advised that the ash tree may have dieback, but this couldn't be properly identified until the spring. Cost estimates for work are expected soon. Council **RESOLVED** to write a letter of thanks to Capricorn Engineering for their prompt work freely given.

**21/169 Correspondence**

*[Cllr Sims did not take part in this discussion.]*

**K Wilson address to December's meeting, FOI request and email of 4 Jan 2022**

In the light of a further submission on the same subject which was the notes of his 15-minute address to this meeting Council **RESOLVED** (Cllr Sims abstained) to roll this issue to the next meeting to address all the comments made to all the meetings. Further, the clerk will seek clarification on the conflict of advice received from DALC and the Monitoring Officer.

**21/170 Representative Reports**

The Raddon Hills Group report received from Cllr Lane was noted and no suggestions were offered for a theme for the next meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

**21/171 Business at Chairman's Discretion**

The Chairman advised that a Parishioner with expertise in Affordable Housing would be invited to the next meeting. He was already helping another resident who appears to have missed the chance to get a house locally.

**21/172 Items carried forward to the next meeting**

- i) Village Annual Tidy-Up Day**
- ii) Small Trees in Rec Hedge**
- iii) Allocation of Affordable Housing**
- iv) Public Session at January's Meeting**
- v) History Society Talk on Archaeological Dig**
- vi) Dinneford St Water Outlet**

**21/173 Date of Next Meeting**

This was confirmed as 7pm on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at the Memorial Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11:08pm.

Signed ..... Date .....

Cllr A Foster, Chairman

# Thorverton Parish Council

## APPENDIX A

### Report from County Cllr Margaret Squires

This time of the year Councils are preparing the budget for the coming financial year. This year it is not easy to get a balanced budget. Adult Social Services and Children's services have a shortage of carers and social workers - which is the case nationwide. Using agency workers cost more than those employed directly. Please see below to see a promotion drive.

Our rural areas always seem at a financial disadvantage. SPARSE a national organisation representing rural authorities have over many years been working to persuade government that we need Fairer funding. Services cost more to deliver in a rural area. Yet as many of you will know the funding that goes straight to schools from government leaves Devon schools at a disadvantage to the tune of approx. £250 per child.

Chance for people out of work in Devon to become keyworkers

Proud to Care Devon has launched a campaign to recruit 2,000 more Care Workers urgently in the county, particularly in domiciliary care and care homes. The campaign is encouraging those looking for training opportunities to consider if their skills and values are suitable for a career in care.

Proud to Care is offering free one-to-one telephone support to find out if a job in care is right for you. You don't necessarily need qualifications or previous experience. What's important are your core skills, values and your attitudes towards working with people who need care.

Furthermore, thanks to the European Social Fund, there are free and flexible courses to support people to find the right role, or to take a step up, in health and social care. The courses are being offered by partners across Devon including Learn Devon, City College Plymouth, South Devon College, Exeter College and Petroc.

The Find Your Calling campaign aims to mobilise an army of new care workers in Devon, encouraging people with the right values and core skills to apply. The campaign calls for people to register their interest by completing a quick online form at [www.proudtocaredevon.org.uk/findyourcalling/](http://www.proudtocaredevon.org.uk/findyourcalling/).

Applicants will get a call back and the offer of free one-to-one support to find out if a job in care and health is right for them.

Need some help or advice?

The Proud to Care Devon Team are happy to help or offer advice. Please contact us if you have any questions about how you can help promote the campaign: [proudtocare@devon.gov.uk](mailto:proudtocare@devon.gov.uk)

As you will know there is a Parish Review launched in Mid Devon and this could affect parishes as we know them. Parishes will have been contacted and I would urge all to comment with their thoughts during the consultation period – consultation started on 16th December for eight weeks. Parish Councillors know their parishes and boundaries better than others and now is the chance to voice any concerns you have. Further info can be [parishreview@www.middevon.gov.uk](mailto:parishreview@www.middevon.gov.uk) or write to Parish Review, Electoral Services, Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane Tiverton EX16 6PP

I will be more than happy for you to copy your response to me. I will also be commenting during consultation.

# Thorverton Parish Council

## APPENDIX B

### Report from District Cllr Bob Deed

February is always the busiest month of the year at Mid Devon District Council as the Budget for the coming year 2022/2023 is discussed at Cabinet with recommendations going forward to Full Council on Wednesday 23rd February. Whilst Cabinet generally is the decision making body, major finance and some other decisions must be made at Full Council and on a recorded vote basis of the Councillors.

At Cabinet, on 1st February, which was just under three hours in length, we considered and approved papers on:-

- Budget Options for Climate Investment;
- Bereavement Services Fees and Charges;
- Waste and Recycling Options;
- Litter Strategy;
- The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard Policy; and
- Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road Project.

Also we received a verbal update from the Cabinet member for Continuous Improvement and from the S151 Officer on Financial Monitoring plus we noted reports on Performance and Risk and 3 Rivers Development Limited.

Additionally, Cabinet considered other papers and recommended the following papers to Full Council for approval:-

- National Non Domestic Rates;
- Capital Strategy;
- Treasury Management Strategy 2022/2023;
- Capital Programme;
- Budget;
- Policy Framework;
- Pay Policy; and
- Establishment

In terms of direct involvement with Members of the Public, the portion of the Council Tax increase to be applied to Band D properties is £5.00 representing a rise in MDDC Council Tax demand for 2022/2023. The portion of the Council Tax payment taken from householders for MDDC is around 10%-11% of the total. The remainder goes to Devon County Council, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, Devon and Somerset Fire Service and your Parish precept.