

THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of an Extraordinary Meeting of Thorverton Parish Council held at the WI Hut, Thorverton on Monday 16th March 2026 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Andy Price (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Stuart Crang

Cllr Andrew Foster

Cllr John Hodge

Cllr Graham Sims

Cllr Bryanna Uglow

Cllr Karl Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE:

ABSENT

None

17 members of the public, D/Cllr Rhys Roberts, Jim Roberts (Clerk and RFO)

1 Chair Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome to all.

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Foster is the Chair of TCLT. Cllrs Hodges, Uglow & Wilson are members of TCLT.

Cllr Uglow is the Council's nominated member of the TMH Committee.

3 Apologies

None.

4 Public Open Session

The first speaker volunteered his experience of surveys and use of Google Drive to assist with a possible online aspect of a questionnaire to the Parish. He circulated examples of questionnaires and how the results are presented.

The second speaker, a director of the Thorverton Community Land Trust, gave a quick update on the TCLT Silver St project. The plans are now 15 properties, most social rent with approx. 3 shared-ownership properties. TCLT anticipate planning permission in early 2027.

Ambitions for the South side of Silver St have been parked for the time being. As far as the Diocese Field is concerned one board member attended one meeting with other stakeholders last year and they did not 'tip off' the developer. The Diocese has signed a legally binding agreement with the developer so he expects that some building will inevitably take place on the Glebe field.

Thorverton might be able to influence some aspects of the developer's plans and TCLT is happy to be part of the dialogue. If Summerfield are agreeable to the discussion TCLT would hope to influence the creation of starter homes at the Glebe Field site

When questioned the speaker further explained that the South Site had been parked, informally, so the Church Commissioners could deal with an open market developer.

This had principally been done to not jeopardise the North site development.

He confirmed North Site is not legally secure.

Third speaker stated that local churchgoers have been raising concerns about the Diocese plans since the last summer when they first heard of the possible sale.

In January they had been told that the Diocese will want to listen to the serious concerns The speaker asked how the PC meeting was arranged.

.....
Chair
Initials

The Chairman advised that the developers offered to attend a PC meeting prior to the village meeting planned for two days later. He emphasised that this needs to be considered within the context of all the possible development plans for the village.

C/Cllr Rhys Roberts advised how developer optional agreements work and described it as a 'punt' for the developers at this stage. The village should influence the likely development and destination of the s106 funds, usually used for education, local amenities etc, that may derive. He was given some assurance that the developers will listen to the local views on affordable housing. Optional agreements are time limited. He further advised that MDDC are working with Summerfield via one planning officer with only one meeting so far. MDDC won't waste Council taxpayers' money on objecting to the plans as they have a 40% higher housing target.

Council asked about the imminent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and if the s106 threshold will change for sited from 1 hectare to 2½ hectares. D/Cllr Rhys Roberts is not aware of this measure but would not be surprised.

A fourth speaker asked about objecting to the Glebe Field on sewage grounds.

D/Cllr Roberts advised bringing forward objections as strongly as you can.

Cllr Uglow advised that Highways may hold up the development as the traffic impacts will have to be looked at. This might make the development unaffordable.

The effectiveness of Local Plans was discussed and, while not a magic bullet, it is useful to have a fully-adopted Plan in place.

The fifth speaker asked about turning all the hot air into a co-ordinated plan going forward. The Chair said this is what this meeting is about.

[1 member of the public left at 8:08pm]

5 The Development of the Diocese Field next to The Glebe

Cllr Crang felt it is necessary to see if the village would support spending money by employing a consultant to help present the most viable objections. He firmly stated that the Council must not spend money without surveying the village to get support for this expenditure.

[1 member of the public left at 8:16pm]

The planning process is tilted in presumption of approval and won't be turned down unless the objections significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

[Cllr Hodge left the meeting at 8:19pm]

Council suggested a working group that would finalise a survey. This would need to include a way of identifying the contributors as bona fide electors and avoid multiple entries. The group would decide between physical and online responses and the method of delivery. The survey would need an explanation before the questions covering:

- What we know is happening
- Reportage of Diocese and Development
- Other developments in the Parish
- Planning considerations – changes to the Housing Target

Everything to be done by the April meeting .

Responses will be confidential but every encouragement given for people to get involved, no matter whether for, against or neutral.

[3 members of the public left at 8:27pm]

Council discussed if the Parish Council in favour of any development? If so what sort of development. The existing plans for Affordable Housing are supported as long as mitigation is in place.

[3 members of the public left at 8:35pm]

Council **RESOLVED** to establish an unbiased and neutral Working Group consisting of Cllrs Price, Wilson & Uglow, D/Cllr Roberts, Messrs Cashmore & Wiles chaired by Cllr Crang. **Prop** Cllr Crang **Sec** Cllr Wilson

[9 members of the public & D/Cllr Roberts left at 8:38pm]

<p>..... Chair Initials</p>

6 Wooden Equipment on the Rec

Council considers the wooden equipment is pretty tired but Cllr Sims will be looked at more closely in a better light. The main problem is the steps and platforms. Council hopes to get some help from funders but may need to buy a piece of kit at a time. Chair will try to get the working group together again but is aware of lots of fundraising in the village (notably the Cricket Club for the new pavilion). Postcode Lottery is an option. Council will monitor this equipment closely and discuss at the next meeting.

7 Planning Applications

7.1 [26/00076/FULL](#) Ruffwell Inn Revised drawings re Demolition of pub and 4 new dwellings

Council **NOTED** that the revised drawings are closer to Silverton’s neighbouring plan.

7.2 [26/00338/FULL](#) Chilton Gate Kennels Redevelopment of rescue centre into 5 dwellings

Council **NOTED** that this is another revision to the plans to redevelop this property.

Council **RESOLVED** to make no comments on these applications.

Prop Cllr Crang **Sec** Cllr Foster

8 Next Meeting

7:30pm Tuesday 14th April 2026

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:49pm.

Signed Date
Cllr Andy Price, Vice- Chairman