THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of Thorverton Parish Council held at the Memorial Hall, Silver St, Thorverton on Tuesday 13th October 2026 at 7:30pm**.**

PRESENT	**ABSENT**
Cllr Andrew Foster (Chairman)	Cllr Andy Price (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Stuart Crang	Cllr John Hodge
Cllr Rhys Roberts	Cllr Karl Wilson
Cllr Graham Sims	
Cllr Bryanna Uglow	

IN ATTENDANCE: 3 members of the public Jim Roberts (Clerk and RFO)

1 Chair Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting with a welcome for all.

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Uglow is a member of Thorverton Community Land Trust and the Council's nominated member of the Thorverton Memorial Hall. Cllr Foster is Chair of the Thorverton Community Land Trust.

3 Apologies

Cllrs Price, Hodge and Wilson were unable to attend tonight. Council **RESOLVED** to accept the reasons given.

4 Public Open Session

The Chairman opened the public session with an email from the Planning Consultant regarding item 8.2.1 (Wain Homes development) below:

> *[The Transport consultant]* and I have been considering where things now stand in light of DCC Highways' criticisms of the TA (as well as the lack of a TP and RSA).
> In *[The Transport consultant]*'s view (with which I concur) traffic surveys shouldn't just be limited to the village itself, but include the junction with the A396 and the wider network around the village to include the possibility of rat running as well. Presuming that Wain Homes haven't done this, then pursuant to best practice, surveys shouldn't be done (as they'd be unrepresentative) until April 2027.
> There's also DCC's point about the pre-app advice recommending 2 accesses to the site. If they have to do this work from scratch it's going to take them quite some time.
> In light of this he and I think it worth writing to MDDC to request that they ask Wain Homes to withdraw the application and resubmit (next year?).
> One of our concerns is the prejudice to the PC and the Action Group that the current situation gives rise to. Given that we (you) are incurring costs on an application that is deeply flawed, and might be withdrawn, there's some urgency to this. I'm also conscious that I'm due to submit an invoice to cover my work over the last month, but am unsure as to who to invoice (PC or Thorfest).
> I'd be grateful to receive your instructions - perhaps it could be considered at the PC meeting tomorrow?

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The contention is that the application is withdrawn and submitted as there are significant flaws, especially with the Transport Assessment.
D/Cllr Rhys Roberts advised that it is not within MDDC's gift to withdraw any planning applications; the applicant can only withdraw. It may be tactically advantageous to let the application proceed and raise all the errors
D/Cllr Roberts cannot call in the application for scrutiny but he has asked the Chair of Planning to call it in. This will be classed as a Major Development under the new rules which is likely to allow District Cllrs to question the applicant at committee. MDDC Officers can still call in applications. He encouraged all activity to continue at pace. He does not expect Wain Homes to withdraw the application if asked.
A member of the public has spoken to the Planning Officer who has advised that should additional information be introduced further representations can be raised up to the Friday before the Planning Committee meeting.
The Chairman also noted that the Devon Highways objection ran to 8 separate points.
A second member of the public emphasised the tactics were important and, if no more evidence can be added on appeal, then it seemed to make sense to let the current flawed application go forward and fail on its flaws. Thorverton should submit as full a case to support their objection in the light of the appeal rules.
Th first speaker agreed that tactics were important and noted that Highways rarely object, giving more weight to the lengthy objections. Wain Homes could add additional information and appeal if they weren't successful. They would always have the opportunity to sort out issues and submit a new application. He urged that the consultant does write to ask MDDC to urge WH to withdraw the current application so that TCAG don't need to extend a lot of effort objecting to the flawed application only to have to put the same effort or more into the inevitable subsequent application.
The second speaker asked the Council to check whether additional representations could be made on appeal.
A third speaker advised that in his experience Districts and applicants are normally loathe to withdraw applications.
Council asked about the scale of the development and TCAG advised that the Planning Consultant had advised that this was an important issue with many implications. Increase population 17%, size of developed village by 20%. The sustainability of the development is very dubious with so many implications for all concerned.
Council emphasised the quality of the physical relationship of the development to the current village is crucial to WH in achieving Planning Permission.
TCAG has another meeting on Friday with the Planning Consultant and will discuss the request to withdraw.
Council clarified that their comments need to be agreed at November's meeting.
TCAG reminded the meeting that a full village leaflet drop had been done and a longer, more detailed, document will be circulated soon with full step-by-step instructions on how to object.
Council noted that the current objections on the website are of good quality and clearly had been thought about carefully.
D/Cllr Roberts advised that, in his experience, the number of objections is what concentrates the minds of the Planning Officers.
Council may well need to get together to formulate the comments in advance of November's meeting. TCAG offered to attend to help. The output of this informal meeting can then be put on the agenda for resolution at November's meeting.
TCAG thanked the Council for the speedy instructions for the two expert

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consultants. The third consultant (Ecology) should only cost approx £1,400 rather than the £5,000 mooted at September's meeting.
The funding of the consultancy was discussed and it was noted that Thorfest has limited funds and is deciding each stage on its merits. Thorfest is considering the Planning Consultant's second bill which TCAG are committed to paying. TCAG envisages needing donations to meet the consultancy fees and urged everyone to donate if they could.
TCAG pointed out that a Cllr had said he would fund part of an Ecology report if it covered his land.
Council is very keen that the position on funding is clearly understood by the Parish, both the level of expenditure and the benefit to the community.

[3 members of the public left the meeting at 8:28pm]

Council discussed the funding of the expert consultants. Council has already resolved to spend up to £5,000 on expert reports (para 5.1, September Extraordinary meeting) and £1,500 on a Planning Scoping (para 8.2, June 2026 meeting) report. The estimate for consultancy is £7,500-£10,000 for the main consultant. The Hydrology report is yet to be finalised.
The Chairman will clarify with the main consultant what work he will do once the other reports have been completed (and an indication of costs) and confirm that his report will be shared with the Parish Council

5 Minutes

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting held in June (Extraordinary Meeting), July and September monthly meetings all held over from last meeting and September 2026 (Extraordinary Meeting) **Prop** Cllr Crang **Sec** Cllr Uglow

6 External Reports

6.1.1 County Councillor incl Highways

Council **NOTED** the written report, see appendix A.

6.1.2 Traffic Calming on Berrysbridge Road

Carried forward to the next meeting

6.2 District Councillor

D/Cllr Rhys Roberts will circulate a written report and the Chairman thanked him for his very useful contributions to the public open session.

6.3 Saturday Market

No report this month.

7 Projects

7.1 New Cemetery

Council **RESOLVED** to apply for free hedging from the Woodland Trust (in the first instance) for the March 2027 slot. **Prop** Cllr Uglow **Sec** Cllr Sims

7.2 Housing Development throughout the Village

Fully discussed under the Public Open Session above.

7.3 s106 - future funding and current projects

Cllr Roberts is trying to pin down the elusive officer at MDDC and will report back when he is successful.

7.4 Affordable Housing project

Council **NOTED** the TCLT statement.

7.5 Barliabins

Council **RESOLVED** to fund the materials up to £50 to repair the rotting gate

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and thanked the volunteer for generously offering his services.

Prop Cllr Foster **Sec** Cllr Crang

7.6 Allotments

Council had been offered the site but now the Church Commissioners were inviting an offer from the Parish Council. Council estimates the value (as agricultural land) as approx. £10,000. Council will flag an interest to the Church Commissioners and consider what offer should be made.

7.7 Sheep Dip

Council is unwilling to buy the sheep dip due to the contamination of the site. It has been discussed at least twice before and the cost implications of ownership are too onerous. Council **NOTED** the History Society's letter but could not agree to purchase the site on this occasion.

7.8 Christmas

Council **RESOLVED** that the unmetered supply cannot be used this year due to the £4,000 annual bill. The clerk will advise the National Grid. Due to the doubt over the electricity supply the Council will order one tree for the Village Hall and arrange the other for the Jubilee Green if a volunteer can be found to supply the power. The Chairman will advise the volunteers and Cllr Uglow will advise TMH.

Prop Cllr Crang **Sec** Cllr Roberts

The switch on will be on 29th November and Council hopes there may be something that can be done on to rectify this situation.

8 Planning & Consultation

Planning Decisions

Council **NOTED** the following decision:

8.1 26/00338/FULL Chilton Gate Kennels Convert to 5 dwellings **APPROVED**

Planning Applications

8.2.1 26/01201/MFUL Lynch Road Erection of 66 dwellings, including access roads and associated infrastructure

Carried forward to the next meeting.

8.2.2 26/01287/TPO Thorverton School Fell one pine tree subject of a TPO

Council **RESOLVED** to support the felling of this diseased/dead tree which is on its land.

Prop Cllr Uglow **Sec** Cllr Roberts

Very Recent Planning Applications Consideration of an Extraordinary Meeting

8.3 No such applications received.

Consultation

8.4 MDDC Local Green Space Consultation

Carried forward to the next meeting.

9 Recreation Ground

9.1 Financial Report for Sept

No expenditure in September. The ride-on mower has been faulty and will need new blades and drivebelt. Cllr Sims also advised that to replace the play tunnel like-for-like will cost £15,000.

9.2 WI Hut

Council recognises that the stopping nets have still not been erected using the s106 funds and the Football Club needs assistance with this. It is understood that the s106 will not fully fund the nets, the patio and furniture. The work may need to be limited to the available funds.

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10 Grounds Maintenance

10.1 Contractor

Work for the month before the next meeting will be weedkilling and grass cutting.
Council **NOTED** the increase in the hourly rate the contractor will charge from December 2026 which Cllrs considered very reasonable.

11 Finance

11.1 Bank

Council **NOTED** the current balance of £ 74,805.51 (8th October 2026) and income since the last meeting of Interest £29.46, Garages £70.00 and Precept £22,070.

11.2 Grant Giving Mid-Devon Mobility request
Carried forward to the next

11.3 Budget Review Quarter 2 2026-27
Council RESOLVED to approve the Qtr 2 Budget Review as presented (see appendix B)

11.4 Payments

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments;

11.4.1 Ben Fitch Grounds Maintenance September inv BF202600169	**£**	**576.47**
11.4.2 Elite Ecology Independent Technical Review **(payment will be sent on receipt of report)**	**£**	**2,160.00**
11.4.3 J P Roberts Clerk pay for September	**£**	**489.93**
11.4.4 HMRC PAYE & NIC for September	**£**	**151.37**

Prop Cllr Crang **Sec** Cllr Sims

12 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10th November 2026.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10:06pm.

Signed ……..…… Date ……
Cllr Andrew Foster, Chairman

Appendix A C/Cllr Keable's Report

Cllr Steve Keable

October 2026



Devon County Councillor's Report - Creedy, Taw & Mid Exe:
Bickleigh • Brushford • Cadbury • Cadeleigh • Chawleigh • Cheriton Fitzpaine • Coldridge • Cruwys Morchard • Down St. Mary • Eggesford • Kennerleigh • Lapford • Morchard Bishop • Newton St. Cyres • Nymet Rowland • Poughill • Puddington • Sandford • Shobrooke • Silverton • Stockleigh English • Stockleigh Pomeroy • Thelbridge • Thorverton • Upton Hellions • Washford Pyne • Wembworthy • Woolfardisworthy • Zeal Monachorum

Steve.keable@devon.gov.uk

Mid Devon Councillor's Report - Taw Vale:
Chawleigh • Lapford • Nymet Rowland • Wembworthy

Skeable@middevon.gov.uk

October's newsletter for Parish Councils, their Councillors and our communities.
Please share, so all can stay informed about local decisions, community initiatives, and take-up opportunities to have your say, or to tell me about matters that are important to you.

Okehampton Interchange

Okehampton Interchange is a £18 million investment made possible through £13.5m of UK Government with matched local Councils funding, opened for travellers in August. Passenger demand far exceeded projections, achieving over 0.5 million journeys within the first two years of operation.

The station is expected to deliver significant economic benefits. Okehampton Interchange and Marsh Barton station, which opened in 2023, are together projected to generate around 1,500 permanent jobs and contribute approximately £112 million annually to the local economy over the next decade.

Barnstaple Interchange

Passengers using Barnstaple Railway Station are set to benefit from a series of improvements designed to make changing between buses and trains easier, safer and more convenient.



Work has begun on the railway and bus interchange to improve connections, creating a more welcoming, accessible and safer public transport system. With more bus stops, upgraded passenger and cycling facilities to make it easier for people to move around. DCC are working with GWR and Network Rail on this joint funded project.

This continues the pressure for more rail investment as rail travel dramatically increases in Devon. Crediton has 1.5m passengers travelling on the Okehampton and Barnstaple lines. Network Rail have announced the next planning stage for £100m investment to modernised the North Devon Line to achieve a 30-minute service and targeting 2035 for possible battery electric trains.

Children's Services Improve – Headline findings

Change and improvement are really being delivered in Devon for children and their families, all within 15-months of the May 2025 election. Follow the QR code to read the September letter from Ofsted to the Department of Education and Julian Brazil, Leader of Devon County Council.

- Children and families largely receive a timely, well-coordinated and increasingly integrated multi-agency response from practitioners and managers who are well-equipped to undertake their roles.
- Leaders have taken deliberate and purposeful action across these services to bring greater alignment, increase capacity, support and train staff and better shape the internal and external conditions for practice improvement across front door services.
- There is an accurate understanding of the strengths and remaining inconsistencies across front door services.
- The findings of this visit closely align with Devon's own self-evaluation of practice and the areas they have identified for further improvement.
- Plans continue to be appropriately focused, with leaders having already acted before this visit to further refine services, performance measures and governance arrangements to support greater consistency and improve the help that children and families receive.

Use this QR code to read the full Ofsted Inspector's letter on Devon:

Report a road problem to Devon County Council

Rural areas under-report Highway defects and potholes. You can help by doing this on line. We need to get ready for this winters Super El Niño. Use this QR code.

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Chair
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Devon on right track as Government approves SEND reform plan



The Government has given a vote of confidence in Devon's progress on SEND, approving the county council's reform plan and announcing an indicative £191m grant to repay 90% of the council's accumulated overspend on SEND up to the end of 2025/26.

The Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care said it recognised the progress made by partners across education, health and local government in developing a shared plan to improve support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The approval means Devon County Council is eligible to receive a High Needs Stability Grant covering 90 per cent of its Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit accrued up to the end of the 2025-26 financial year, with an indicative allocation of £191.3 million, subject to final confirmation.

Government's approval of our reform plan recognises the hard work and commitment of staff, schools, health partners, parent carers and everyone involved in driving improvement across Devon. It recognises we have developed a strong plan for improvement and are making progress in the right direction.

Local Government Reorganisation

As a local Councillor I welcomed the Government's decision to pause and review proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Devon.

Mine and the MDDC Cabinet had previously raised concerns with the Secretary of State about the speed of the process and the limited opportunity for meaningful local involvement in decisions that could significantly affect community representation. Particular concern was expressed about protecting community identity and ensuring that rural areas continue to have a strong voice in local decision-making.

Use this QR code to read the letter send from the Leader of Mid Devon & Cabinet to the Secretary of State

Local Green Space Consultation – Opportunity for Parish Councils

Parish Council Clerks will have received the **Plan Mid Devon Local Green Spaces Consultation Package**. This is part of the preparation for **Plan Mid Devon**.

This is an opportunity for parish and town councils to nominate additional green spaces that are particularly important to their communities for consideration as **Local Green Space** designation.

Closing date: 7 January 2027

Plan Mid Devon Update

This is the new Local Plan that will guide future development across the district. Information is available on the Mid Devon Council website and the Let's Talk Mid Devon engagement hub.

The Council is working to the Government's new 30-month plan-making timetable, with **adoption currently scheduled for April 2029**.

Key milestones include:
October 2026: Publication of the Gateway 1 self-assessment.
January to March 2027: Consultation on proposed plan content and supporting evidence.
January to March 2028: Consultation on the draft Local Plan.
September 2028: Submission of the plan for independent examination.
April 2029: Planned adoption of Plan Mid Devon.



Being positive: Lapford Neighbourhood Plan, 2nd public meeting

People in Lapford have been working their own Neighbourhood plan that will influence Plan Mid Devon. Their Plan's Objectives include: Natural Environment, Net Zero, Built Environment, Housing, Traffic & Travel and those all important Community Facilities. This plan process provides an opportunity for people to have more say about what goes on in their local area.

A neighbourhood plan is prepared by Town and Parish Councils or by local community groups and not the District Council. A Neighbourhood Plan does not need to cover every topic that is included in the Local Plan. It might include policies for only a handful of issues, such as local housing need, climate change, and areas of local green space, where a local community feels that something is not satisfactorily covered in the Local Plan.

Printed & Published by Cllr Steve Keable, Bromstone Cottage, Lapford, Crediton, EX17 6PZ

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Thorverton Parish Council Budget 2026-27 -- Quarter 2 Review							
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26		2026-27	2026-27	
Payments	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Qtr 2	Notes
	Payments							
Staff costs	£ 7,222	£ 5,780	£ 7,893	£ 10,160	£ 7,506	£ 8,800	£ 4,102	
Administration	£ 1,437	£ 820	£ 1,814	£ 1,500	£ 2,918	£ 1,500	£ 610	Room hire, stationery, Audits, Website, Xmas, etc.
Prsh Mntnce - cntrctr	£ 3,509	£ 2,015	£ 1,980	£ 3,000	£ 3,225	£ 5,000	£ 3,540	Trees
Prsh Mntnce - matrls	£ 2,971	£ 1,306	£ 671	£ 3,000	£ 1,183	£ 3,000	£ 198	
Recreation Ground	£ 933	£ 680	£ 2,770	£ 1,250	£ 13,891	£ 2,000	£ 977	Trees, seats, inspections, repairs/garden
Allotments	£ 255	£ 238	£ 291	£ 250	£ 115	£ 250	£ 90	Maintenance
Grant Giving	£ 1,098	£ 875	£ 1,300	£ 1,500	£ 1,550	£ 2,000	£ 100	
Insurance	£ 719	£ 746	£ 832	£ 1,000	£ 843	£ 1,200	£ 855	
Annual Subs	£ 323	£ 440	£ 390	£ 500	£ 419	£ 750	£ 412	ICO, SLCC, DALC
Legal fees			£ -	£ 500	£ -	£ 500	£ -	
Training	£ 114	£ 402	£ 60	£ 750	£ 60	£ 1,000	£ 360	CiLCA
Barliabins	£ 668	£ 668	£ -	£ -	£ 7,580	£ -	£ -	
New Cemetery	£ 1,140	£ -	£ 10,145	£ -	£ 5,405	£ 10,000	£ -	
Archaeological Dig	£ 2,000	£ -	£ 7,099	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Elections		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Affordable Housing		£ 494	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
New Play Equipment	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 2,500	£ 2,500	£ 2,500	£ 10,001	£ -	
Charging Points	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
General Reserves		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Defib donation		£ -						
Total	**£ 24,389**	**£ 16,464**	**£ 37,745**	**£ 25,910**	**£ 47,194**	**£ 46,001**	**£ 11,245**	

Chair Initials .....