

Present: Cllrs Crang, Wills, Turner, Hodge, Waldron, Spivey, Sims and Lane.

In attendance: The Clerk, D/Cllr Deed, C/Cllr Squires.

Open Session: 12 members of the public were present of which 3 wanted to speak in connection with the planning application regarding land at NGR 292670 101097 formerly part of Yellowford Farm, School Lane, Thorverton. No members of the public indicated that they wished to speak on any other matter. 1) Mr R Parr spoke for 2-3 minutes on the proposed planning application and explained his family's intentions for the farm over the next few years. 2) Mrs J Greed spoke in opposition of the application for 5-6 minutes 3) Mr R Cashmore also registered his opposition and spoke for 4-5 minutes adding his concerns regarding the MDDC Planning process.

The Chairman asked to suspend the PC's Standing Orders to allow a longer open session and this was agreed. The Councillors then asked questions of Mr Parr regarding a) sewage and slurry waste plans to which Mr Parr reported that the animals and fertilizer would be fully policed to ensure no issues occurred with waste and he added that the Environmental Agency had not reported any problems with the plans. He assured the PC and public that no commercial sludge would be stored on the land as the animals would be deep bedded on straw indoors then the waste would be spread on the land. This was a design that evidenced no leakage; b) future plans for a residential house and Mr Parr advised that there were no plans for this; c) extent of any increased traffic in the village and Mr Parr advised that he currently works the land with tractors, trailers, combines and other vehicles so there should only be a small increase in traffic. Larger vehicles would use the Cowley Bridge road. The track through the original Yellowford Farm – which the owner had permitted use of - would also be used; d) footpaths in general and Mr Parr reported that he was now complying with all footpath requirements but admitted there had been problems in the past. He said his intention is to rotate the field behind the Hall with grass and arable and he pledged to keep the footpath open. A resident queried why the grain store was required if the land was to be grassed out and Mr Parr answered that only 20 – 25 acres would be grass each year and so the grain store would still be needed.

16/01 Apologies: PCSO Randle due to this being a rest day. C/Cllr Squires would be late due to another meeting.

16/02 Declarations of Interest: the Chairman advised that due to rules on predetermination any Councillor that had been involved in the production or distribution of the planning poster (copy shown) being circulated around the village regarding the Yellowford planning application should consider whether they are able to approach this matter with an open mind and if not they should withdraw from any discussion.

16/03 Confirmation of Minutes – Cllr Hodge asked for the fact that he had queried the 'run off' situation at Yellowford Farm last month to be minuted and the Clerk agreed to this. The minutes were then signed as a correct record of the December meeting as proposed by Cllr Lane, seconded by Cllr Turner and RESOLVED.

16/04 Open session feedback: The Chairman brought this item forward from correspondence a) on the Agenda below. He reported that usually e-mails received from the public would be read out but due to the large number received on this matter (circulated) it was not practicable. Copies were available from the Clerk if required. D/Cllr Deed advised all present that he had taken note of the public feedback from today's meeting regarding MDDCs conduct of the Yellowford Farm planning matter and will report this. The PC was reminded that any comments it decided to report must be limited to planning matters. D/Cllr Deed advised of the planning objection process and his part within it. Cllr Spivey asked whether it is normal for Highways to make 'no comment' on such an application and it was noted that Highways and the Environment Agency would automatically see any proposals and would comment as they felt fit. MDDC Planning Department had apologised through D/Cllr Deed for putting the planning notice in the wrong place which they corrected as soon as this was notified. Cllr Wills enquired as to whether a restriction on the use of School Lane could be a condition of consent but D/Cllr Deed advised that it could not.

After discussion all were reminded that it was MDDC Planning who are responsible for planning decisions. Cllr Wills suggested that the PC should amalgamate the comments and concerns raised by the public earlier in the meeting and report these to MDDC Planning. Cllr Hodge declared an interest and made no comment. Cllr Turner raised concerns regarding the traffic and lack of overall information available on the proposal and several Councillors agreed. Cllr Sims told of past waste 'run-off' issues from the site and how this affected the highway and how he feared this would happen again if the plans went ahead. Cllr Lane suggested the comments from the PC should include concerns regarding flooding and highways and any issues raised at the public session. Cllr Wills proposed that the PC make the following comment 'many concerns have been raised by residents regarding this proposal at today's public session and so the PC urges MDDC Planning to pay particular attention to the following issues so as to give assurance to both residents and Councillors of Thorverton that 1) safety and suitability of access along School Lane will be assessed; 2) visual impact of any development in the open countryside will be reviewed and 3) that the environmental impact will be investigated further. The PC had already asked for the public footpaths to be kept open and this should again be noted'. After consideration this proposal was seconded by Cllr Turner and RESOLVED. The Clerk would arrange the feedback to MDDC within timescales.

16/05 Dispensations: None.

16/06 Councillor Resignation – the Chairman read out an e-mail dated 18th December 2015 from Cllr Mary Ette advising of her decision to resign from the Parish Council due to a family illness. The PC was sad to hear of this and the Clerk was asked to send a letter of thanks to Mary for her past service on the Council.

16/07 Councillor Vacancies – MDDC had been advised of Cllr Ettes resignation and a Notice of Vacancy had been placed on the notice board in School Lane. Cllr Lane requested that the rules of the recently adopted co-option policy be followed meaning that this vacancy would need to be advertised for 4 weeks from 17th January, being the end the MDDC notice period, and this was agreed. Should no election be called the co-option would take place at the March PC meeting.

16/08 Co-option: there were 3 applications for the PC to consider regarding the vacancy left by Cllr Pollard.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at this stage to allow any applicants to speak –

One applicant was present, introduced himself, and pledged his commitment to the Council should he be co-opted.

Within two minutes the Chairman re-opened the meeting.

Voting took place by way of a ballot, as agreed at the last meeting, and after the second round of voting Mr Nick Bright was co-opted onto the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to contact the 2 unsuccessful candidates, to thank them for applying and to request agreement for their applications to be carried forward to March.

16/09 New Councillor training – the Clerk advised that a place had been reserved on the DALC New Councillor training course on 21st January at a cost of £25 + VAT for the newly co-opted Councillor. It was agreed that Mr Bright should attend if available and that the Clerk should arrange this.

16/10 Reports:

(i) D/Cllr Deed reported that a) car parking charges were being reviewed and were likely to increase; b) waste collections were over budget and costs were being reviewed and c) that the new Chief Executive of MDDC was due to start his new role shortly.

(ii) C/Cllr Squires was not available for this part of the meeting but joined the meeting later – see 16/13 below.

(iii) PCSO Randle had sent in a report, read out by the Chairman, noting that in December one crime had been reported which is still being investigated and which does not have any impact of the local Community.

16/11 To consider **correspondence** received to the date of the meeting -

a) Numerous e-mails received regarding the Yellowford Farm planning application (circulated). This matter was discussed under 16/04 above.

b) E-mail from Dunster PC regarding the paving stones for sale (circulated). Noted.

- c) E-mail from Thorverton Memorial Hall requesting additional funds of £40 for Christmas tree lights (circulated last month but received too late for a decision). Cllr Hodge declared an interest. See below for the Council's decision on this.
- d) E-mail from Thorverton Memorial Hall requesting £40 for the Jubilee Green Christmas tree and advising that any future tree and/or lights would need to be sourced by the PC. The Hall offered to hand the old tree lights to the PC together with the electric supply details. After discussion Cllr Spivey proposed that the £80 total requested should not be agreed. Cllr Spivey gave his reasons for this as 1) the Hall should have advertised the fact that no tree was going to be put on the green this year in time for alternative arrangements to be made; 2) the new battery operated lights gave a very poor show and 3) as many residents had voiced their disappointment about the situation in general. After consideration this proposal was seconded by Cllr Turner and carried. The Clerk was asked to advise the Hall Committee.
- e) E-mail from Thorverton Memorial Hall requesting TAP funding (circulated) of £1,318 to pay for security equipment. This was discussed at length and Cllr Wills proposed that the request be supported and that Rewe Parish Council be approached to counter sign the application. This was seconded by Cllr Lane and RESOLVED. The Clerk would raise the application.
- f) E-mail regarding the possibility of a village communal skip (circulated). See below (16/20 vi).
- g) Various road work notifications (circulated). The Clerk advised that Silver Street would not now be closed this coming week as the works had been postponed until 15th and 16th of February.
- h) Buckingham Palace Garden Party (circulated) a request for a nomination. After discussion it was proposed by Cllr Crang, seconded Cllr Spivey and RESOLVED, that former PC Councillor and Chairman, Mr Michael Ayre, be nominated for this event. Clerk to arrange.
- i) MDDC Verge Cutting Consultation update (circulated). Noted.

The following items are for information only:

- j) Hackney Carriage and private Hire Policy Consultation (circulated). Noted.
- k) E-mail regarding Her Majesty the Queen's 90th Birthday in June 2016 (circulated). Noted.
- l) Corporate Plan Consultation (circulated) from MDDC. Noted.
- m) A letter of thanks from the Citizens Advice following the PC's donation. Noted.

Note: All correspondence circulated is in the public domain.

16/12 Precept demand and DALC annual membership payment

Following a review of the budget documentation (circulated) and a full discussion it was proposed by Cllr Waldron that last year's precept demand be increased by 2% to £14,045.40 which would allow for £5000 to be taken into 'general reserves' which could be used for purposes other than the churchyard extension if required. This was seconded by Cllr Lane and RESOLVED. After reviewing the VAT situation it was proposed by Cllr Turner, seconded by Cllr Wills and RESOLVED that the annual DALC membership fee be taken from the Precept.

C/Cllr Squires joined the meeting at this stage.

16/13 Highways –

Hulke Lane – no update.

Community Lengthsman – Cllr Spivey last month requested that the Council consider joining the Raddon Group in creating a Group Community Lengthsman role in 2017/18. After discussion it was agreed that the PC would be interested but that it would want to review a proposal prior to any further decisions being made.

Village Maintenance – Cllr Turner suggested that village maintenance needs should be considered monthly and where agreed work should be commissioned and paid for. It was noted that a resident had offered to assist with village maintenance and the Chairman stated he would write to Focus inviting anyone else interested to come forward. He agreed to find out about the Road Warden and chapter 8 training schemes and whether SW Highways would have any available help. A review of processes at this stage was felt necessary as the PC would inevitably have to carry out more village maintenance as services from MDDC and DCC get withdrawn. A decision on the 2016 Annual Maintenance Contract was postponed until February.

Zig Zag lines outside of the School – C/Cllr Squires reported that she was due to meet with Steve Tucker of DCC Highways to discuss the School Lane road re-surfacing and the zig zag lines and would report back next month.

Village Shop library van in the Quarry Carpark – the shop owners had advised the Clerk that the van would be removed from the car part upon re-location of the shop to the Thorverton Arms.

16/14 Planning – the following planning matters, received to the date of the meeting, were considered:

- 15/01955/TPO works to reduce the crown height by 3m of 1 oak tree at 31 The Glebe, Thorverton. Noted.
- 16/00052/TPO works to reduce the height by 6m of 1 oak tree at 27 The Glebe, Thorverton. Noted.
- 15/01919/FULL installation of replacement windows and doors, re-instatement of blocked up window, erection of slate roof over existing lean to and demolition of timber lean-to at Harefields, Jericho Street, Thorverton (comments by 5 January). The PC gave no comment.
- 15/01728/FULL Change of use of part of dwelling house to general store at Berry Dairy, the Bury, Thorverton. Permission granted.
- 15/01681/CLU certificate of lawful use or development at Canns Farm. Granted.
- 15/01516/FULL Installation of a self-service car wash/vacuum/tyre pressure facility at Thorverton Mill. Permission refused.
- The village shop transfer from the Quarry Car Park to the Thorverton Arms – it was reported that as the Thorverton Arms had been registered by the PC as a Community Asset on 20/05/2014 planning permission would, unfortunately, now be required to enable the public house to accommodate a shop. D/Cllr Deed had spoken to the owners in this respect and as a result a delay in the move was now expected.

16/15 Development –

Graveyard extension – The PCC representative had spoken with the Church Commissioners (CC) who had instructed their Agents, Strutt & Parker, to provide proposals to the PC for discussion at next month’s meeting.

16/16 Property Management -

Transfer of the Jubilee Green – no update. The Clerk was asked to chase this matter.

Trees on the Jubilee Green – Cllr Turner reported that a site meeting was awaiting dryer weather.

16/17 Recreation Ground –

Viridor Grant & S.106 – the Chairman thanked Cllr Waldron and the Clerk for their work on this project. Cllr Waldron reported that an application for £18,136 (ex-VAT) had now been sent to, and accepted by, Viridor although decision making would not take place until mid-February. MDDC had advised the Clerk that S106 funding now stood at an increased £4990 and that agreement had been gained for the purchase of the Wicksteed Cobra stand up see-saw.

Transfer of the Rec from MDDC to the PC – no update. The Clerk was asked to chase this.

Tree and tree stump requiring attention – the Clerk had chased the Contractors for a response today.

16/18 TAP (Town, Parish and Community) funding – covered under correspondence e) above.

16/19 Financial matters -

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| • Payment of the Clerks net salary for December 2015 | £184.00 |
| • Payment of tax to HMRC regarding Clerks salary for December 2015 | £ 46.00 |
| • Refund of deposit for Allotment number 13 vacated 31/12/2015 | £ 25.00 |
| To note credits received to the account: | |
| • Transparency Code Grant Funding credit | £925.00 |
| • Allotments rent to date | £200.00 |

It was proposed by Cllr Turner, seconded by Cllr Wills and RESOLVED that the above payments be made. Cllr Lane declared an interest in the Allotment refund. Bank Account balances were reported as totalling £37,286.02 (£30,000

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ring fenced for the graveyard extension project) as at 31st December 2015 and prior to the above transactions. Statements and Accounts circulated.

16/20 Committee Representative Reports –

- i) Memorial Hall – Cllr Hodge reported that there was nothing further to report.
- ii) Focus – Cllr Lane advised of the Focus AGM which would take place on 2nd March.
- iii) Raddon Group – Cllr Spivey advised that the next meeting would be in February.
- iv) Thorverton School – Cllr Wills advised that the Annual Report regarding the School Field had been received (as per the School/PC Agreement) and circulated and it was well received by the PC and stated how valuable the field is to the School. Cllr Wills had attended a Welcome Ceremony for the new Executive Head of the Federation, Mr Joliffe, who is now living in Thorverton. The Clerk was asked to send thanks to the School for the report and to note the PC's interest in it and she should suggest that the School send extracts of the report to FOCUS.
- v) TMGT – Cllr Spivey advised there was nothing to report.
- vi) Saturday Market – Cllr Lane reported that only 1 person had shown an interest in the communal skip at the last market and that there had been no positive feedback from the FOCUS report. He suggested that this matter be put on hold until further notice and this was agreed. Cllr Lane said he would speak with the resident who sent in the e-mail objecting to the skip and advise him of the PCs decision.

16/21 Parish Council Public Relations (PCPR) –

- **Village skip** – the PC agreed to put this matter on hold until further notice (see 16/20 vi above).
- **Saturday Market** – Cllr Hodge would attend in February and the Clerk would attend in March.

16/22 Data Protection membership – the Clerk advised that the PC should register with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) annually as required by the Data Protection Act 1998 with the current cost being £35 for the year. It was proposed by Cllr Turner, seconded by Cllr Wills and RESOLVED that the payment be made at the start of the new financial year.

16/23 Pension auto-enrolment – it was proposed Cllr Hodge, seconded Cllr Waldron and RESOLVED, that the Clerk be the PC's contact in this respect and it was confirmed that no further action was needed by the PC at this stage.

16/24 Financial Regulations – the Clerk reported that the PC's current financial regulations appear to sit within its Standing Order document which was not in accordance with normal practices. She offered to correct this by creating 2 new documents for the PC to consider for adoption in due course and this was agreed.

16/25 Audit Review – the Clerk advised of the latest position and the PC agreed not to opt out of the standard arrangements for an external auditor. The PC was asked to nominate an internal auditor for this year and Mrs Christine Chanin was proposed by Cllr Spivey, seconded Cllr Turner and resolved. The Clerk would contact Mrs Chanin and was given authority to place an advert in FOCUS for an alternative internal auditor if necessary.

16/26 Employment Review – the Clerks six monthly review became due on 1st January and Cllrs Crang, Turner and Wills agreed to arrange a meeting shortly to review progress.

16/27 Village Defibrillator – an updated was read out and it was noted that the defibrillator will be housed on the external wall of Parkers Insurance Brokers shortly. Free training was in place for 1st February, in the Memorial Hall, from 5pm for all to attend. The Clerk was given authority to organise the previously agreed cheque of £250 should this be required prior to the next PC meeting which was proposed by Cllr Crang, seconded by Cllr Wills and RESOLVED. All Councillors were urged to attend and support the training by the Chairman.

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16/28 Transparency Code Funding and the PC Website – the Clerk advised that a £950 credit had been received into the PC's bank account as a result of the recent application for grant funding and that VisionICT had been given the go ahead to build the PC's new website. Councillors (and residents) are able to submit any landscape sized photographs of views around the village, or of village events, to the Clerk to be considered for inclusion on the new website.

16/29 Communications – Vodafone - Cllr Spivey reported that this matter is proceeding well.

16/30 Business at the Chairman's discretion –

- a) A resident had asked for a dog bin to be considered for the top of Jericho Street due to the increasing amount of dog mess seen in the area. It was agreed that this subject would go onto the next Agenda.
- b) The Clerk reported that Stoke Canon Bridge would not now be closed until further notice.
- c) Cllr Waldron suggested that the PC may wish to consider entering the village into the Best Kept Village Scheme, or something similar, this year. It was agreed to put this on the next Agenda.
- d) Cllr Spivey gave his apologies for next month.
- e) Cllr Sims enquired as to any update regarding the removal of the rollers from the Recreation Ground and the Clerk agreed to chase this as no response to the PC's letter had been received.
- f) C/Cllr Squires gave her apologies for next month.

To confirm the date, time, and venue of **the next Parish Council Meeting** – Tuesday 9th February 2016 at 7.30pm at Thorverton Memorial Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.55 pm.