

**MINUTES of the THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019,  
at Thorverton Memorial Hall, 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs Lane, Crang, Flatt, Foster, Hodge, Lawson and Sims.

**In attendance:** Mrs A Marshall (Clerk), C/Cllr Squires, no members of the public.

Standing Orders suspended.

**Public Open Session:** No members of the public present.

**External Reports:**

**a) C/Cllr Squires** had provided a report advising that a Net-Zero Task Force had been created, with the aim of producing a Devon Carbon Policy, and Devon residents are invited to submit ideas to Devon County Council (DCC) on reducing carbon emissions. Regarding road matters, residents are reminded that any issues can be reported on-line at [www.devon.gov.uk](http://www.devon.gov.uk) or by telephone on 0345 1551004.

**b) D/Cllr Deed** had circulated a report regarding the Hulk Lane bridleway – see item 19/135i, below.

**c) The Police** – no crimes had been reported in Thorverton parish during September.

**19/127 Declarations of interest:** Cllr Lawson declared disclosable pecuniary interests in items 19/130 and 19/139(ii) due to having been involved with both applications.

**19/128 Apologies:** Cllr Waldron, holiday. Cllr Deed, work commitment. Cllr Wells, illness.

**19/129 Confirmation of Minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019:** It was RESOLVED to sign the Minutes as a correct record.

It was agreed that agenda items 14, Grant Funding, and 15, Christmas tree arrangements, should be brought forward due to Cllr Hodge needing to leave the meeting early.

**19/130 Grant Funding:** Cllr Lawson had declared an interest and so left the room. Cllrs Hodge and Wells, of the working group, had discussed the Thorverton Millennium Green Trust's application for funding towards planning permission costs for the new mower housing and recommended to Council that the funding be granted. Due to the project being considered to be of benefit to the whole community it was RESOLVED to grant the requested £230. It was felt, however, that it would have been preferable had the grant funding application been received prior to the container being purchased and the planning permission being submitted.

**19/131 Christmas tree arrangements:** Cllr Hodge confirmed that both the Jubilee Green and Memorial Hall Christmas trees had been chosen and that a local farmer had kindly agreed to collect them on November 27<sup>th</sup>. Several volunteers were able to help erect and decorate the trees and Cllr Hodge would take the project forward.

**19/132 New Cemetery:** The Chairman reported that the next steps would be to prepare and submit the planning permission application for the new Cemetery. It was RESOLVED that the working group produce an Action Plan of things needing to be taken forward, including timescales, for Council review at the January or February 2020 meeting. The draft planning application would be put together and presented to Council for consideration in due course, prior to submission to MDDC.

**19/133 S106 - Court Barton funding:** No update had been received from the Church Commissioners regarding the Council's offer to purchase of the Sheep Dip - the Clerk would continue to chase a response. The Chairman reported that MDDC may decide to give Thorverton Cricket Club the £3,000 it had requested from S106 funding, for an electronic scoreboard, even though the Parish Council was not in support of this due to the item not being consistent with suggestions gained from the public in 2018 regarding the spending of S106 funds. As the Silver Street to Millennium Green footpath project could not be moved forward, due to difficulties in sourcing suitable land to purchase, the S106 working group had met to discuss alternative projects and suggested that land at the top end of the School field, owned by the Parish Council and currently leased to the School, could be enhanced for the benefit of the whole community. A skate park had been considered but due to costings being in the region of £50,000 this had not been taken forward currently. The top of the School field could be enhanced by putting gate access to it from The Glebe, with a possible gate into the School also, by clearing and managing the existing trees and shrubs, erecting new fencing along the School boundary, planting a fruit orchard amongst the existing trees, placing a

basketball hoop, or similar, within a small play area and putting picnic tables and benches around the communal open space. Costings had been estimated at just over £13,000 matching the remaining funds within the Court Barton S106 pot at this time. It was confirmed that the School would need to be involved with any further decision making and that a review of the current Lease would need to take place. It was suggested that existing trees would need to be surveyed prior to any being removed or thinned. Cllr Crang confirmed that this land had originally been acquired by the Parish Council as 'public open space' and for use by the School and that this project would not stop the School from using the land. It was RESOLVED that an application should be submitted to MDDC capturing the proposed new project as documented. The Chairman thanked Cllrs Lawson and Foster for the work put into this review.

**19/134 Quarry Car Park:**

**i) Electric car and an electric car charging point facility** – Cllr Lawson reported that up to 75% of the cost of placing an electric car charging point in the car park could be applied for and that, should the Parish Council wish to take this forward, help was available. The application would require a survey and a working group would be needed to take on further investigation. The total costs involved were not currently known due to several options being available. Following discussion it was RESOLVED that the Chairman would ask the Climate Action Group to liaise with Cllr Lawson in order that an application could be produced so as to take this project forward. It was noted that it would be helpful if any costs involved were known prior to the setting of the Precept in January. As for the electric car project it was RESOLVED that more information was needed before any decisions could be made. Once the information was at hand the matter could be discussed at a future meeting.

**ii) South West Water Compensation Claim** – Cllr Crang reported that the matter is in the hands of the Land Agents and that no update had been received prior to the meeting.  
Cllr Hodge left the meeting.

**19/135 Highways matters:**

**i) Hulk Lane dedication of Public Bridleway** – Cllr Deed, on behalf of the Parish Council, had recently attended a meeting with C/Cllr Squires and Tom Vaughan of DCC Highways regarding this matter. Cllr Deed had circulated a report stating that the current permissive bridleway had been agreed between DCC and the land owners and that both were content with the arrangements. The bridleway would be in place for a minimum of 15 years and the arrangement would, thereafter, be reviewed on a yearly basis. It was noted that DCC Highways, or the land owner, could give 6 months written notice to disband the bridleway after the initial 15 year contract. C/Cllr Squires confirmed that DCC do not have the funds to re-instate the highway. Cllr Deed had recommended that the Parish Council should accept the current situation. The Chairman reminded all present that it had been understood that Hulk Lane was going to be a public bridleway, in perpetuity, and not a permissive bridleway with a term attached to it. When questioned about the aforementioned meeting C/Cllr Squires confirmed that there had been no discussion regarding the lane being designated a public bridleway, even though this had been agreed by Council to be the main reason for the meeting. It was thought that DCC Highways owns the two end sections of Hulk Lane and that the land owners own the permissive bridleway, being the middle section of land. It was RESOLVED to accept the Chairman's offer to write to DCC Highways to ask the questions not addressed at the recent meeting including the status of the lane, what section the permissive bridleway applies to, what would happen if this section was closed, why a public bridleway had not been put in place, to date, and how this could be achieved so as to meet expectations of the public and Parish Council and what signage was to be put in place.

**ii) DCC Highways Conference and HGV's along Berrysbridge Road** – Cllr Foster had attended the annual DCC Highways Conference where it had been confirmed that the proposed HGV warning signage for the road to Berrysbridge would not be agreed, due to there being no authorised signage available. Available authorised signage would be investigated. Cllr Foster had also attended a meeting about 'Doing What Matters' being a DCC Highways trial regarding the involvement of local councils when reviewing remedial road work. Update to follow.

**iii) Traffic along North Down Road and Lee Cross** – Cllr Crang had received queries from residents about the poor state of the lanes and the increased traffic at the north of the parish and had investigated the matter. A map of the area was reviewed and it was concluded that the increased traffic was due to the increased number of dwellings in

the area, from 11 in the 1960's to approximately 35 today. The state of the minor narrow roads had continued to deteriorate over the years, due to both lack of road maintenance and more traffic. It was noted that, due to national planning policy, the Parish Council had not been able to comment on several of the new development plans which had been sanctioned by MDDC under Class Q. Following an offer from C/Cllr Squires it was RESOLVED that Cllr Crang and Steve Tucker, DCC Highways, should meet with C/Cllr Squires to review the issues and to ascertain whether anything could be done to improve the situation.

**19/136 Recreation Ground:** The circulated RoSPA annual play and gym inspection report was considered and it was noted that there were no high risk issues needing attention. Cllr Sims reported that the crocodile swing could be repaired at a reasonable cost and so it was REOLVED that, on the basis of the RoSPA report stating that all timber is generally in good order, the crocodile swing should be repaired within a budget of £250.00. Cllr Sims volunteered to take on the project. Regarding a new ride-on-mower it was RESOLVED that a letter be sent to the Premier League Football Association to find out whether Parish Councils can apply to the Premier Leagues Small Grant Scheme.

**19/137 Handyman:**

i) It was RESOLVED to pay the salary requests of £306.00 and £44.62 gross.

ii) The Handyman's monthly report was considered and it was agreed to add to the duty list the removal of mud from the stream at Jubilee Green. It was noted that the spraying course should take place prior to the New Year.

Snow Warden - it was RESOLVED that the Handyman be asked to take this on, unless Cllr Hodge wished to do so, and that the Clerk should organise the required training. Cllr Crang had checked the salt bins to the north of the village, which were all full, and advised that further salt was being stored at Bidwell Barton and at the School. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk check the village salt bins and order more salt, if available at no cost.

Jubilee Green trees - it was reported that a tree on Jubilee Green had recently lost a large branch and that a local Tree Consultant had suggested that this tree, plus another, required attention due to fungus. Cllr Lawson proposed that both trees be reviewed by a professional tree surgeon and that an application to fell, as necessary, be submitted to MDDC as soon as possible. It was RESOLVED that a local Tree Consultant, who had offered advice at no cost, be asked to review the situation and that an application to MDDC be made as required.

**19/138 Finance:**

- 1) Bank balance – it was noted that the bank balance, as at 01/11/2019, stood at £78,236.60
- 2) Banked receipts for October - Precept (final 50%) £7,801.00
- 3) It was RESOLVED to make the following payments:

A Marshall - Clerk salary	Nov. salary £370.27 gross, plus tax rebate	£376.87 net.
N Matthews - Handyman salary	November salary £306.00 gross, less tax	£244.80 net.
C Marshall – Handyman salary	Final salary £44.62 gross, plus tax rebate	£68.03 net.
HMRC – tax due	N Matthews	£61.20
A Marshall – expenses	2000 external Xmas tree lights, ink, stamps	£99.62 (incl VAT)
MDDC	TPC election costs (May 2019)	£765.91 (VAT n/a)
AC Archaeology Ltd	Community Dig costs	£9,930.00 (incl VAT)
Women's Institute	WI Hut Hire – DAAT event	£10.00 (VAT n/a)
EDF	Jubilee Green Xmas tree lights Dec 2018	£73.34 (incl VAT)
Josh Kenshole	Quarry Car Park work (paid October 2019)	£370.00 (VAT n/a)

**19/139 Planning Applications:**

i) **19/01527/MARM** Reserved matters for the erection of 16 dwellings – revised drawings and additional information – land south of Broadlands, Thorverton. Further to discussion it was RESOLVED to submit the following comments: Residents in Broadlands would like more information on the planting to the northern boundary of the site adjoining their gardens as they do not want large trees to overshadow their gardens. The Soft Landscaping Scheme details

have already been requested but still do not yet appear to be available. Plot 13, Butley, has a bedroom window facing/overlooking Broadlands (no.12 in particular). Given that this new bedroom has three windows can the one overlooking Broadlands be removed and the window overlooking the allotments be enlarged, if there is a need to compensate. Can MDDC ensure that the hedgerow on the western side of the road to Berrysbridge is to remain intact and outline planning stage indicated that some of this would be removed which is great cause for concern. Can MDDC ensure that the electric charger points to each dwelling promised in the Design and Access statement be enforced. Can the road leading from Thorverton village to the site be widened where the new pavement is being constructed - there is currently a deep verge on both sides which would accommodate this - the area is currently a pinch point for traffic which will be made worse following further development.

**ii) 19/01701/FULL** Retention of a storage container – land west of the Millennium Green, Thorverton. It was RESOLVED to support this application which suggested a practical solution to the immediate problem of storage space being required for the mower.

**19/140 Planning Decisions:**

**i) 19/01465/FULL** Change of use from agricultural land to formation of residential vehicular access and track – revised scheme – at Charolles, Thorverton. **Approved.**

**ii) 19/01047/FULL** Creation of a new field entrance – Thatchers Lane, Thorverton. **Approved.**

**iii) 19/01501/PNCOU** Prior Notification – change of use from agricultural land to a dwelling at Thatchers Lane, Thorverton. **Approved.**

**19/141 MDDC Planning Committee Meetings** - following discussion it was RESOLVED that, at any time in the future and until further notice, the Chairman could attend any MDDC Planning Committee meeting falling between Parish Council meetings to put forward Parish Council comments as resolved at a previous meeting.

**19/142 Representative Reports:**

**i) Footpaths** - Cllr Foster had circulated a report stating that ownership of land along the Armour Wood path was still being investigated and that footpath signage could be a consideration at a future Parish Council meeting.

**ii) Saturday Markets** - Cllr Lawson had circulated a report from the October Market which listed feedback from residents concerned about the new Broadlands housing development – see item 19/139i above. Cllr Lane had attended the November Market and had handed out several Satisfaction Surveys for completion and return.

**iii) Speedwatch** - Cllr Hodge had supplied data for October showing that 4 sessions had taken place along Silver Street and that 293 vehicles had been monitored, of which 20 had been speeding. The highest recorded speed in this 30 mph area was 52 mph. Those recorded as speeding would be contacted by the Police.

**iv) Focus** – Cllr Lane reported that the Focus magazine had achieved 11<sup>th</sup> place, out of 360 entries nationally, for the best parish magazine in 2019.

**v) Memorial Hall** – Cllr Flatt had circulated a report advising of forthcoming events at the Hall and it was noted that the new monthly Community Cinema events were proving to be very popular. Plans for improving the outside seating area were being drawn up.

**19/143 Committees:** Postponed until the January meeting.

**19/144 Defibrillator:** Further to confirmation that the Defibrillator would need to be moved, due to Parkers Insurance Brokers having moved from the village, the local Doctors Surgery had agreed to mount it on an external wall. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Lane should take this matter forward.

**19/145 PART 2 (private session):** It was RESOLVED that due to the sensitive nature of the business to be discussed the following item should be dealt with as Part 2 business and, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be asked to leave the meeting:

**i) Clerks annual review** – Cllrs Lane and Deed of the Employment working group had met with the Clerk to conduct the annual review and it was confirmed that all objectives were being met to a high standard. It was RESOLVED that as the Clerk's work load continues to increase the weekly working hours should be raised from 7 to 8 with effect from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019. A further review of hours would take place in May 2020. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for a good years work on behalf of the Parish Council.

**19/146 Business at the Chairman's discretion:**

1. It was confirmed that there was no update regarding the purchase of the Sheep Dip.
2. Cllr Sims advised that the reservoir in Dark Lane had been cleared by the working group and Cllr Crang volunteered to clear any debris.
3. Cllr Lane suggested that the recently circulated Action Plan document should be reviewed in order that consideration could be given to taking it forward at a future meeting.

**19/147 Next meeting:** Tuesday December 10<sup>th</sup> 2019.

The meeting closed at 21.35

Chairman ..... 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019