

**MINUTES of the THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on Tuesday 10th December 2019,
at Thorverton Memorial Hall, 7.30pm**

Present: Cllrs Lane, Wells, Waldron, Deed, Crang, Foster, Sims and Lawson.

In attendance: Mrs A Marshall (Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

Standing Orders suspended.

Public Open Session: 3 members of the public wished to speak.

1. School Field enhancement project - the resident had supplied information on the history of the land, and the Covenants attached to it, which had been circulated. He suggested that the land had been purchased as a 'public amenity' and not as 'public open space' as had been quoted in the parish council's November meeting Minutes. Councillors were asked to review the information provided prior to moving forward with the project. The Council was asked why it was in such a hurry to spend the Court Barton Section 106 funds as it was understood that they would remain available until 2025.

2. School Field enhancement project - the resident said that news of the proposed project had given cause for concern as it had been understood that the land could not be built on. The Council was asked whether the Conservation Plan had been consulted, whether it was aware of the Tree Protection Orders and the strict Covenants prohibiting building and excavations on the land. Another concern was how children using the park, and the School, would be kept safe. The issue of trespass by unsupervised children onto neighbouring properties was raised along with the impact of noise and nuisance and the effect on neighbouring property values. The Council was asked to check and follow proper procedures for the allocating and spending of these public funds.

3. Processes – the resident raised concerns about communication between the community and the Council and questioned the accuracy of agendas, Minutes and communications. Transparency, and the work taken on by Working Groups, was also questioned. He asked for the roles and responsibilities of Councillors to be published and commented on the low number of completed 'satisfaction surveys' received. He offered help in order to improve the situations mentioned.

The Chairman responded in that the queries raised would be answered during the meeting. The roles and responsibilities of Parish Councillors could be found on both village notice boards and on the Parish Council's website. A Communications Policy is in place which can also be found on the website.

External Reports:

a) C/Cllr Squires had provided an update regarding the rolling out of superfast broadband across Devon and Somerset and how Devon is bucking the trend on the use of local Libraries with borrowing rates up 4%.

b) D/Cllr Deed reported on the Local Plan Review which is in the process of being completed following amendment. It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be signed off in early 2020 and, as a result, any speculative planning applications will be stopped. It was confirmed to Cllr Crang that this change will bring into place the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will replace Section 106 funding.

Standing Orders resumed.

c) Police statistics for October saw the reporting of 1 'crime other' which remains under investigation and 1 'criminal damage including arson' which has been closed due to no suspect having been identified. A member of the Parish Council had been invited to a meeting with the Police, 7pm, Tiverton Town Hall on Thursday 19th December, and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Foster attend and report back to Council in January.

19/148 **Declarations of interest:** Cllr Sims, reimbursement of funds in connection with the mending of play equipment. Cllr Lawson, planning 19/01936/HOUSE due to being the Agent.

19/149 **Apologies:** Cllr Flatt, previous commitment. Cllr Hodge, work commitment. C/Cllr Squires.

19/150 **Confirmation of Minutes:** It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the meeting of November 12th 2019 as a correct record.

19/151 **New Cemetery:** Cllr Waldron reported that AC Archaeology and Vanita Eden are continuing work on the reports documenting the recent archaeology community dig and that these would take several months to complete. It was suggested that now could be the right time to apply for planning permission and that the Working Group could meet to consider the application, an Action Plan, and a Business Plan to include costings, a feasibility report and potential income. It was agreed that a business plan should be put in place prior to the planning application being submitted. Cllr Deed requested sight of the motion passed regarding the creation of a new Cemetery which the Clerk would provide. Cllr Crang confirmed that this had taken place and was fully documented. It was RESOLVED that the Working Group would feedback to Council at a future meeting regarding the abovementioned requirements.

19/152 **S106 - Court Barton funding:**

i) Sheep Dip – the Church Commissioners (CC) had accepted the Parish Council's offer to purchase the site for £1 and it was RESOLVED that the purchase should go ahead subject to the results of contamination testing. Council was reminded that MDDC had agreed this project and that £7,000 had already been received to enable the process to move forward. The Clerk would circulate the MDDC project application/costings document. Cllr Foster confirmed that quotes had been obtained regarding contamination testing which would be reviewed at the January meeting.

ii) School Field enhancement project - Cllr Lane reported that MDDC had pressurised the Parish Council into submitting a project deemed suitable for the remaining Court Barton Close Section 106 funding and, as the Silver Street to Millennium Field walk way had not proved fruitful, alternative projects had been discussed. It had been resolved to investigate the enhancement of the school field as a potential project and it had been thought to be premature to consult the public prior to receiving agreement from MDDC that it would be suitable for allocation of S106 funds. As a positive response had now been received the Council could decide on how best to engage the public. As a result of the project being mentioned in the November meeting Minutes and the Focus magazine members of the public had contacted the Council to raise concerns as evidence in the earlier public open session. It was confirmed that the Working Group had met with the School, currently leasing the land in question, and that the idea has been received positively. Cllr Deed reminded all present that Section 106 funds are available to any appropriate body to use to enhance village amenities. Cllr Lawson suggested that the Parish Council would not do anything to disrespect the Covenants and would take on board all that had been raised by members of the public. It was confirmed that the Working Group felt that a quiet public community space could be achieved within the said area, the Conservation Area Management Plan would be adhered to, no trees would be taken down without good reason and that a tree survey would be carried out. It was noted that the School had spent £3000 on fencing and that strict specifications would need to be adhered to for further fencing. Cllr Lawson reported that the School is struggling to maintain the space which is now vastly overgrown. It was hoped that by working with the School a much more amenable space could be created which could be used by the community as well as the School. Cllr Foster raised the safety aspect of children and families being able to use the proposed open space to walk to and from School to avoid School Lane, being a busy road. Gates at the entrance to the open space and at the School boundary would also help with safety, along with new fencing. Cllr Crang recalled that in 1979 the land was purchased as 'open space' due to there being no other power under which to purchase such land at that time, suggesting that it should have public access. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk would investigate any documentation held in this regard and that the Working Group would put together a business plan and meet with adjacent home owners to review documentation such as Covenants.

iii) Footpath along Silver Street to the Cricket Club – a resident had requested that a footpath to run along Silver Street to the Cricket Club be considered. Although it was thought that Section 106 funding could not be used for such a project and that the costs would be too high it was RESOLVED that Cllrs Crang and Wells would look into the matter.

19/153 **Quarry Car Park:**

i) South West Water Compensation Claim - Cllr Crang reported that SWW was remaining intransigent, in that there had been no loss of Freehold by the laying of cables in the car park. It had offered to re-site the cables to the edge of the car park but would not pay for a professional valuation to assess the loss of Freehold costs. It would also not agree to a 'lift and shift' clause, which the Parish Council had requested so as to solve the issue. The Council's Agent had suggested that compensation could be claimed once any building work had commenced but as there were no plans to build on the land this was not a practical solution. Due to the Council having a duty not to make a decision on such matters unless professional advice had first been taken the Agent would further liaise with SWW in the hope that it would agree to the requested 'lift and shift' clause.

ii) Electric charging point – Cllr Lane had taken the idea to the local Climate Action Group, as previously resolved, but no feedback had been received to date. Cllr Sims reported a static car in the car park which Cllr Foster volunteered to investigate.

19/154 **Highways matters:**

i) Hulk Lane dedication of Public Bridleway – Cllr Lane had written to Tom Vaughan, DCC, as previously resolved, and a response had been received and circulated. Following discussion a vote to close the matter was not carried.

ii) Snow Warden – it was confirmed that the Handyman would take this role on and that the required training had been requested from DCC Highways. A tonne of salt had been delivered to Bidwell Barton, at no cost. All village salt bins had been checked and were full.

19/155 **Recreation Ground:** Cllr Sims reported that the rope swing had been repaired was now in full working order. Three Elm trees and two benches would need attention within the next year. Cllr Waldron referred to the wild life garden and due to its current state suggested that the School and local residents be asked to get involved in keeping it in good order. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Lane would liaise with the School in this regard and that the Clerk would contact local residents who had helped in the past with the aim of gaining support. Cllr Deed called for the budget and resulting Precept to reflect the annual maintenance costs of this garden, Leigh Gardens and Jubilee Green.

19/156 **Grant Funding:** It was RESOLVED to make a grant to Mid Devon Mobility of £200.00 due to its ongoing help and support to local residents.

19/157 **Handyman:** It was RESOLVED to make the requested salary payment and not to add further duties to the list at present. The Handyman had recommended to Council that a trailer, for sale locally, be purchased at £75.00 and it was RESOLVED that this happen. With regards to storage it was agreed to consider this further at next month's meeting and that, in the meantime, Cllr Crang would circulate the report put together on considering storage for the Recreation Ground. It was noted that the Handyman's job specification should have noted that a vehicle was not supplied with the role.

19/158 **Finance:**

i) Bank – it was noted that the bank balance, as at 01/12/2019, stood at £75,956.32 and that banked receipts for December were £35 from the renting of an allotment and £9,240.00 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

ii) Cancelled cheques – it was noted that cheque numbers 001510 and 001515, payable to HMRC, had been cancelled on the instruction of payroll managers GX Accountants.

iii) Payments – it was RESOLVED to make the following payments -

A Marshall - Clerk salary	Dec. salary £421.88 gross, less tax	£418.08
N Matthews - Handyman salary	Dec. salary £306.00 gross, plus tax rebate	£319.80
A Marshall – Clerks expenses	MDDC brown bin renewal (Jubilee Green) £49.00, Christmas tree plug timer £4.88, Ink pack £37.00.	£90.88 (VAT n/a)

	C Manning	Handyman Spraying Course	£365.00	(VAT n/a)
	D Waldron	Christmas trees – reimbursement	£80.00	(VAT n/a)
	G Sims	Rope swing materials – reimbursement	£182.05	(VAT incl)
	DALC	Cllr Lane attendance at DALC conference	£25.00	(VAT incl)
	TMGT	Grant Funding – agreed November 2019	£230.00	(VAT n/a)

19/159 **Planning Applications / Decisions:**

- i) 19/01987/CAT notification to fell 1 Fir tree within a Conservation Area at Ivy Cottage, Thorverton. No comment.
- ii) 19/01886/FULL erection of 2 dwellings following demolition of 2 existing agricultural buildings at Lodge Farm, Brampford Speke. No comment.
- iii) 19/01936/HOUSE erection of a first floor side extension (revised scheme) at Victoria Orchard, Dinneford Street, Thorverton. Cllr Lawson left the room. No comment. Cllr Lawson returned to the meeting.
- iv) 19/01527/MARM – reserved matters for the erection of 16 dwellings south of Broadlands, Thorverton. An extension for the submitting of comments had been requested.
- v) 19/01701/FULL retention of a storage container – land west of the Millennium Green, Thorverton. Granted.

19/160 **Christmas:** It was RESOLVED to update the list of Parish Council volunteers and to send Christmas cards to those listed. Cllr Waldron volunteered to oversee the arrangements for taking down the Jubilee Green Christmas tree and surrounding lights in January which was RESOLVED.

19/161 **Jubilee Green trees:** The Clerk had not been able to contact the person who had volunteered to provide a free consultation of the trees as yet.

Due to time restraints it was RESOLVED to postpone the following agenda items until the January 2020 meeting:

19/162 **Representative Reports:** Postponed until January.

19/163 **Defibrillator:** Postponed until January.

19/164 **Satisfaction Surveys:** Postponed until January.

19/165 **Business at the Chairman’s discretion:** Cllr Lawson asked for a review regarding the current structure of notes appearing in Focus and it was agreed to put this matter on the February 2020 agenda.

19/166 **Next meeting:** Tuesday January 14th 2020.

The meeting closed at 21.30

Chairman 14.01.2020