

**MINUTES of the THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2020,**  
**at Thorverton Memorial Hall, 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs S Crang, A Foster, J Hodge, N Lane, G Sims and D Waldron.

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

Standing Orders suspended.

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

**External Reports:**

i) **C/Cllr Squires** reported that Devon County Council's (DCC) budget was due to be finalised at month end and that funding shortfalls would be evident. Funding for special needs and educational facilities continues to be a priority. Highways matters – recent wet weather has exasperated the pothole situation which are being repaired as soon as time allows. Members of the public are urged to report any potholes by using the 'DCC report a problem' on-line site. Cllr Lane reported that Riverford Road, near No Man's Chapel, is now virtually impassable due to potholes and C/Cllr Squires agreed to look into this. Cllr Sims had reported the piece of road which had sunk, at the top of Bullen Hill and asked for this to be addressed. Cllr Crang confirmed that he and Cllr Wells were to meet with C/Cllr Squires regarding the proposed Silver Street footpath project. C/Cllr Squires reported that the road issues at Lee Cross Lane and Perry Lane were being considered and she agreed to report back to Council regarding any action to be taken.

ii) **D/Cllr Deed** was not present and had not submitted a report.

iii) **Police statistics** – In December, being the latest data available, no crimes had been reported in Thorverton.

Standing Orders resumed.

**19/188 Declarations of interest:** None.

**19/189 Apologies:** Cllr Deed, another meeting. Cllr Flatt, work commitment. Cllr Wells, holiday.

**19/190 Confirmation of Minutes:** It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of January 14<sup>th</sup> 2020 as a correct record.

**19/191 Co-option of a new Parish Councillor:** Mid Devon District Council had confirmed that there had been no call for an election, following the recent resignation of Cllr Lawson, and so the vacancy could now be advertised in accordance with the Parish Council's co-option policy. It was expected that a new Councillor would be co-opted at the March meeting.

**19/192 Defibrillator:** It was reported that the cost of a 'like for like' second Defibrillator from the British Heart Foundation would be £600, and that a cabinet would cost £450 (both plus VAT and installation). It was confirmed that £1,473. was currently ring-fenced for maintaining the existing machine and that its electrodes would expire in 2021, costing £80 to replace, and maintenance would cost around £180. The Football Club was in support of a second machine and had offered the club house as a site. Cllr Waldron suggested the WI Hut as an alternative site and that fund raising for the new machine be considered. It was RESOLVED that Cllr Waldron would research the possibility of the WI Hut housing a new machine. After discussion it was RESOLVED to go ahead with the purchase of a second machine, and cabinet, in the near future and that its siting and any fund raising events would need to be discussed further. It was RESOLVED that a notice be put on the defibrillator cabinet(s) asking that after use the details be reported to the Clerk in order that the Parish Council could be kept informed.

**19/193 Sheep Dip purchase:** It was reported that the contamination testing had taken place and that the results were due at month end. The matter would be discussed further at the March meeting.

**19/194 Allotments:**

i) **Purchase of the allotment field** – Cllrs Foster and Lane had met with representatives of the Church Commissioners and, as a result, had circulated a paper detailing the pros and cons of purchasing the plot. Benefits included the safeguarding of allotments for parish residents and preventing the land from being sold to developers. Following discussion it was RESOLVED that ~~an interest in purchasing the land should be logged with the Church Commissioners and that an offer of £20,000 be put forward.~~ The Clerk would investigate finance options for consideration.

*the Parish Council should express an interest in purchasing the land then await the outcome of the finance investigation by the Clerk prior to agreeing what offer to be put forward'*



**ii) Laying of water pipes through the allotment field** – The Church Commissioners, being the owners of the land, had requested that the Parish Council, being the tenant, agree to the laying of storm water pipes along the boundary of the field in connection with the new housing development. It was noted that, according to the plan submitted, no rented allotments would be affected and that access to allotments would be maintained at all times. It was RESOLVED that, prior to signing the Deed of Variation, and as the Parish Council may purchase the land, legal advice be sought. Questions regarding whether the laying of the pipes would prohibit bringing services or access across the land, or hinder any future development, would be asked.

**19/195 South West Water compensation claim:** It was reported that the open letter from SWW, detailing a possible solution to the car park underground cable issue, was still pending. SWW had agreed to pay for the advice given to the Parish Council by its Land Agent but the Parish Council had been asked to pay the VAT on the invoices. Following due consideration it was RESOLVED to pay the VAT as this could be re-claimed by the Parish Council.

**19/196 Recreation Ground/existing and new mowers:** Cllr Sims reported that the mower had been repaired by the Football Club at no cost to the Parish Council. The Clerk had submitted a grant funding request to 'Awards for All' regarding funding for the new mower and it was noted that Viridor funding may be available to the Football Club, but not the Parish Council, for a new mower. The padlock on the Rec gate had been broken and it was RESOLVED that Cllr Sims should remove the lock and not replace it.

**19/197 Handyman:**

**i) Payment, report and duties** – It was RESOLVED to pay the requested gross salary of £51 for the month of January, it was noted that no monthly report had been received and that the Handyman's three month employment review was pending. The duties list was considered and it was RESOLVED that the filling of local potholes, especially at Ford Meadow and Ford Hill, be added to the list together with weeding the flower beds at Jubilee Green and the Quarry Car Park, regularly clearing the mud build up on the beach area of the stream at Jubilee Green and regularly clearing the mud on the road just past Raddon Court with the help of Cllr Hodge. As graffiti had appeared around the village of late it was RESOLVED that the Handyman use a specialised machine to remove it as best he could.

**ii) Purchase of a trailer** – Further to a recent resolution to purchase a trailer for £75 it was reported that the same trailer had since been worked on, to make it fit for purpose, and due to this the price had increased to £200. After inspecting the trailer it was RESOLVED that the offer represented good value for money and so it should be purchased for £200.

**19/198 Store for tools and equipment:** It was confirmed that the Clerk had secured rental on a garage in the village at a cost of £11.10 plus VAT per week. Cllrs Hodge and Crang would continue to investigate permanent storage solutions and suitable sites. It was agreed that Cllr Foster would investigate any local garages for sale.

**19/199 Emergency Plan including a Snow Plan:** Cllrs Lane and Hodge had updated the Emergency Plan, which DCC had recommended should also include a Snow Plan, and it was confirmed that the document continues to be a work in progress. Following discussion it was RESOLVED that the Plan, as is, be published on the Council's website and that the 'householders checklist' be published in the wider community, including at the WI Hut.

**19/200 Grant Funding:**

**i) Citizens Advice Bureau** – Following a review of the number of local people using this service it was RESOLVED to give a grant of £200.

**ii) Thorverton Parochial Church Council** – The request for grant funding was considered, along with the latest guidelines regarding Local Councils providing financial assistance to the Church, and it was RESOLVED to grant the £750 as requested.



ii) **Grant Funding for the benefit of the Parish Council** – It was RESOLVED that Cllr Wells could assist the Clerk in researching and applying for grant funding to assist Parish Council projects.

**19/201 Finance:**

i) **Bank balance** – as at 01/02/2020 the bank balance stood at £72,829.50

ii) **Bank receipts in January** – noted as including allotment rents of £150.00

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

A Marshall - Clerk salary	Salary £421.88 gross, less tax	£418.08 (VAT n/a)
N Matthews - Handyman salary	Salary £51.00 gross, less tax	£49.00 (VAT n/a)
A Marshall – Clerks expenses	McAfee annual laptop security, stationery	£73.99 (VAT n/a)
HMRC	PAYE due (cheque pending ¼ end)	£5.80 (VAT n/a)
Terra Nova Land Management Ltd	VAT re. SWW Compensation Claim	£262.14 (VAT)
A Bunster	Allotment deposit refund	£25.00 (VAT n/a)
N Matthews	Trailer purchase	£200.00 (VAT n/a)

**19/202 Planning Applications and Decisions: 20/00113/FULL** Application and Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey extension following removal of a conservatory at Wee Cottage, Bullen Street, Thorverton. It was RESOLVED to make no comment on this application.

**19/203 Assets of Community Value:** Following discussion it was RESOLVED not to take this matter forward at the current time. It was noted that the Thorverton Arms had been listed as an Asset of Community Value.

**19/204 Communications:**

i) DCC Postcode Local Trust Grant Funding. Noted.

ii) Grant Funding for an electric car charging point. Noted.

iii) The latest from 'Possible' for climate action funding. Noted.

iv) Mid Devon Mobility – to note receipt of a 'thank you' letter regarding a recent donation from the Parish Council.

v) DCC tree maintenance and road closure information in the Bickleigh Area. Noted.

vi) MDDC Town and Parish Newsletter. Noted.

**19/205 Representative Reports:**

i) **Footpaths** – Cllr Foster hoped to be in a position to present an example 'footpath sign' to Council for consideration at the March meeting. A discussion with the owners of the footpath at Parliament was pending.

ii) **Focus** – The Annual General Meeting would take place on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

iii) **School** – Cllr Lane reported that a new wooden building had been erected in the School playground which would be the Music room eventually but that funding had run out prior to the electrics being installed.

iv) **Memorial Hall** – Cllr Lane reported that Roger Fieldhouse had sadly passed away. Roger had been a member of the Parish Council and more recently Chairman of the Memorial Hall Committee. It was RESOLVED to send a sympathy card. Cllr Flatt had submitted a report stating that future events could be found listed in the Focus magazine and that the cinema evenings are continuing to be very successful. At the February Saturday Market Cllr Lane had received complaints about potholes which the Handyman would look into. Cllr Sims volunteered to represent the Parish Council at the March Market.

v) **Thorverton Millennium Green Trust** – 137 trees had recently been planted at the green and the next working party would take place on February 29<sup>th</sup> at 11am to which everyone was invited.

vi) **Speedwatch** – Recently, a vehicle travelling at 51mph along a 30mph village road had been recorded. The latest Speedwatch event had recorded 79 vehicles of which 10 had been found to be speeding. A third Speedwatch area within the village is currently being considered.

**19/206 Business at the Chairman's discretion:**

**1. New Cemetery** – Cllr Lane reported that a meeting of the working group had recently taken place and, as a result, documents for consideration at the March Parish Council meeting had been circulated.

**2. Wildlife garden at the Recreation Ground** - Cllr Sims suggested that the pic-nic bench at the wildlife garden be moved nearer to the play equipment as it was not being used. It was confirmed that two residents had volunteered to lead a team of people to tidy up the wildlife garden and to keep it in order. Anyone interested in joining the group would be very welcome and should contact the Clerk.

**3. Mobile phone reception** – Cllr Waldron enquired as to how effective the three 2G masts in the village were being and whether the Parish Council was justified in paying out up to £60 per year in electricity costs in this regard. It was agreed to put this matter on the March agenda.

**5. Thorverton Arms** – Council was informed that a retrospective planning application may well have been submitted regarding the kitchen extractor fan, located in School Lane, which had been cause for concern for some residents.

**19/207 Next meeting:** Tuesday March 10th 2020.

The meeting closed at 21.31

Chairman .....  ..... March 10<sup>th</sup> 2020