

Thorverton Parish Council

Additional Information for Tuesday 11th February 2025

- 1 Public Open Session 5 minutes maximum per speaker
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Apologies
- 4 Minutes
To approve the meeting minutes of 14th January 2025

5 External Reports

5.1 County Cllr Squires

Request from a resident via Cllr Shelton

Secondly, I have met another parishioner this afternoon who has asked if we could contact Highways regarding the 'Keep Clear' signs at the top and bottom of Bullen Street. They are worn away and people are now parking regularly on them. (There was an incident a couple of weeks ago when a car had parked at the very top of the sign on Bullen Head hill, 2 feet from the kerb, and a bus and tractor and trailer had to reverse the length of Bullen street as they were unable to pass).

Devon County Council [Report-a-Problem webpages](#)

A reminder of all the issues that should be reported using this method

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Pothole

Large 40 mm vertical-edge hole that is also greater than 300 mm wide



Parking

Request enforcement in residents' parking and on-street parking zones



Overgrown vegetation

Pedestrians forced into road, cars over central line, reduced visibility



Public rights of way

For example, blocked access or broken stiles



Hazardous or fallen tree/branch

Fallen tree or branch, or trees that are leaning, unstable, diseased or dying



Debris or obstruction

Thick mud, soil, stones, embankment slips



Defective road markings or signs

White and yellow, stop or give way lines or warning signs



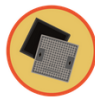
Trip hazard

Hole or significant difference in level on pavement or cycleway



Traffic lights

Damage or fault to traffic lights or signals or school crossing patrol light



Broken inspection cover

Broken, missing or rocking inspection cover



Grit bin

Empty bin, damaged bin or a bin with contents that are unuseable



Bridges and retaining walls

Structural damage or significant obstructions restricting water flow



Fences and barriers

Damaged or missing roadside fences or barriers



Ice

Ice or snow on the road



Street lights, lit signs, lit bollards

Faulty street light, zebra crossing, bollard, lit sign



Flooding and blocked drains

Standing water, blocked drain, flooded property, impassable road

5.2 District Cllr Roberts

5.3 Saturday Market

6 Correspondence

6.1 Various emails from correspondent one

First email and clerk's reply (in red)

1. On co-opting new councillors, I had thought that Council's policy was fairly clear about how this should be done, with adverts on the Council website and in Focus. While Andrew has mentioned in his piece in Focus that there is a vacancy, I don't see this as an advert as such, and I don't see anything on the Council's website (unless one looks at the minutes of course). I think that this could all be far stronger.

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In discussion with the Council I have not advertised Cllr Nightingale's vacancy yet as I hope that she can be persuaded to rejoin the Council. Should she decide to resign permanently the vacancy will be notified to MDDC and advertised in the usual manner according to the policy.

2. It is disappointing that there was no discussion at October's meeting of the purchase of the land for the new cemetery, nor was it on the agenda for November. I am astonished at how slow progress has been on what should have been a very simple matter. I really think that this should be on every agenda until the matter is concluded, and that in between meetings the solicitors need to be asked for a progress update. If the deal fell through, does Council know how much the solicitor's costs would amount to?

I have asked the solicitor for updates each month but with no progress there seemed little point in dragging out the meeting with items that require no action or decision. We are relieved that the latest change to solicitors has led to a contract being drawn up and payment is due for authorisation at the next meeting.

3. I was pleased to see that Winter Warmth was on the agenda for November's meeting and will look forward to seeing the outcome of that item. I note that the

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draft notice publicising Winter Warmth showed it as operating Monday afternoons in the WI Hut and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons in the Thorverton Arms. This sounds very ambitious and potentially expensive. It is also odd given that the WI Hut already hosts afternoon teas on Mondays (for which they charge a small amount). Has Council made an assessment of the likely cost of providing free teas, coffees, biscuits and soup four afternoons a week?

The Council authorised £600 for Winter Warmth a couple of year's ago and we have spent less than £200 of that. Thus the project has been expanded. It should be noted that the Thorverton Arms have never invoiced for their costs, which they have met to date. Now the cold weather has arrived it will be interesting to see if expenditure rockets.

4. I am pleased to note that Steph Shelton is taking on the Emergency Plan. While I understand the desire to have the Plan in hard copy should an incident arise, I would also hope that she would ensure that villagers are aware of the existence of the Plan - which they should find reassuring - and the basics of what it covers and what they might expect in the event of an incident.

Additional comment in later email:

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I have also copied to Steph as a further point occurs to me about the Emergency Plan. We have seen over the past few days how communities can be badly affected by loss of power. I think that it would be well worth specifying within the Emergency Plan an approach to ensure that any people, particularly those most vulnerable, could be looked after in the event of a power cut lasting several hours. With the regularity of storms seemingly increasing, this is something I feel that we need to prepare for.

Steph's revised Emergency Plan has been circulated for discussion on Tuesday.

5. I don't actually understand the wording of the first sentence of paragraph 6.3 of the minutes. Are you able to explain please?

Yes, this was a surprise to me to. Council discussed whether they should fund the Christmas Trees and the electricity bill for the Jubilee Green wondering if the TMH Committee was in a better position to afford the costs. TMH pointed out that they incur costs with the Christmas festivities and the lights for their tree so were already contributing. It was then pointed out that some Christmas costs at the Hall were actually funded by the volunteers who provide the Big Breakfast at the Saturday Markets. That is what the first sentence of para 6.3 tried to summarise. I assumed long-standing Thorvertonians would know all

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about it anyway, Plus Council voted to pay for the trees as normal which made the previous discussion moot.

6. On the November agenda I see that Council was asked to approve £77.94 for website hosting. Is this for Council's website (in which case how many months does it cover?) or is it for the Thorverton Community Land Trust? If there is any expenditure still being made by the Council for TCLT, then this needs to be made very clear. I don't know the George Foster to whom the payment was due, but if he is related to the Chairman, I trust that an interest was declared.

Yes, this is funding for hosting the TCLT website and will be recovered from TCLT when they receive their next grant. From that point on they will be funding themselves and would have to request grants from the PC like all other local organisations.

7. When I attended the Council meeting a few months ago, it struck me that most councillors seemed unaware of the Council's own policies. On looking at the website I see that these are all a few years old now and it might be timely to review them over the next few months and to ensure that they are then followed. If policies are not going to be followed, then they might as well be discarded.

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I've always thought policies should be reviewed annually and I am in complete agreement that policies that have fallen out of use should be abandoned by Council resolution.

8. Finally, please could we have allotment renewal letters sent out before the end of the year. The lateness of letters, leading to uncertainty as to who wanted to carry on with their allotment plots in 2024, was a contributory factor to some plots lying empty through 2024 despite there being people keen to take on plots. It also means that Council has extra expense in needing to clear vacant plots prior to letting. Alison Marshall used to tell me that allotments should be a standing agenda item for the Council. I don't know whether that is really a requirement, but there would certainly be sense in having them on the agenda in December, January and February to update on payments and vacancies.

The letters will be out before the next meeting and the currently vacant allotments will be filled by the end of the month. Thanks to Andrew Foster's not inconsiderable efforts no expenditure has been incurred to clear the vacant plots.

I hope that these comments are helpful. I would, of course, be happy for you to circulate them to councillors, although interestingly, the Council's policy on

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correspondence handling appears to leave it to your discretion as to whether you circulate things or not.

This email has been circulated to Councillors

Second email

Also in relation to the cemetery, I note a statement in the minutes at 11.1 that "...the land can only be used for cemetery purposes as a condition of the sale." That may be problematic if the Council are entering into an agreement to purchase the land on condition that it may only be used as a cemetery. It is not inconceivable that at least some of the land may prove excess to what is needed and so might be suitable for some other purpose. I really don't think that Council should agree to any such stipulation on the purchase.

Third email

I am sorry that I have not received any response from Thorverton Parish Council to my email of 22 November and supplementary email of 9 December, other than your comments back to me on 9th January (on receipt of which I asked you whether you could share correspondence with the BBC which was mentioned in the minutes, to which I have so far received no response). I note that the correspondence was on the agenda of the January meeting and I would

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like to know whether that means I should expect any further response or whether I am expected to take your comments as final.

If your comments represent the Council's position, I would like to come back on them, but I thought I should first wait to see whether a formal Council response was forthcoming.

6.2 Various emails from correspondent two

First email

Dear Councilors,

Please could you put this letter on your next agenda and discuss the following?

This letter should be treated as formal correspondence. Recorded and shared to all

councilors and entered on to your next meeting's agenda for open discussion.

Please can you advise when I may expect a response, in a formal written fashion. Is 7 days

after your next meeting a reasonable timeframe?

Can you please acknowledge receipt of this letter in writing.

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- 1) Can you confirm that the planning permission for the graveyard extension has expired?
- 2) If so, when was the expiry date?
- 3) Please explain in writing the reason why, after three years, the council has allowed this planning application to elapse with no action taking place or no request for an extension?
- 4) Can you please confirm the full amount raised by TPC for the Churchyard development through the precept increase, circa 10 years ago. I believe this to be £30,000 and confirm from your past minutes, the date where this decision was made? And can you please confirm the date the target was achieved.
- 5) Could you please explain why the Churchyard project has been dropped off the council's agenda for at least the last 3 months meetings?
- 6) Please advise and publish publicly, what steps Thorverton Parish council now intends to take to rectify this situation and actually get the graveyard project built.

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7) Can you please confirm the monies raised for the churchyard project are still ring fenced, preserved and not been used for other projects. Could you please forward copies of your bank statements to confirm this?

8) Is it possible to provide me with a document detailing all of TPC's financial transactions over the last 6 months?

I look forward to receiving your prompt confirmation of receipt followed by your written response as soon as possible.

Second email

REF THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL LENDING FUNDS TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Please treat this letter as high importance and confirm receipt by return. This letter should be treated as correspondence and recorded as such.

Please respect that this letter is in confidence and not to be circulated to other TCLT members other than those currently on the TPC.

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Dear Jim Roberts, Andrew Foster and Councilors,
I feel the need to write as I have very, very grave concerns that TPC may be getting itself into difficulties by lending money to a second party, namely Thorverton Community Land Trust. (TCLT)

I had fully intended to attend your last meeting on Monday 9th in the Exeter Inn, but due to other business commitments, was unable to attend.

As some of you may know, I am a motor trader, and consequently, I am registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) I was hoping to come to the meeting to share some advice from the FCA to try and prevent my council from getting into any trouble by lending its funds to other individuals or businesses as per the minutes.

I telephoned the FCA, quoting my own reference number and gave them a scenario of Parish Council lending as per which is detailed in the Parish council minutes and expenditures. For example, for payments for CLT land surveys, website, etc. (already a total of over £8,300.00?). I asked the FCA for advice on what the parish

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councilors should do to safeguard the monies the council holds in trust for the village.

In the commercial world, companies that lend money must comply with having significant levels of compliance

imposed on them by the FCA to safeguard both lenders and borrowers.

Commercial loans to businesses may

be underwritten by the lenders and are usually only offered with personal guarantees from company directors

or similar. Legally binding documents and contracts are then signed by both parties and copies exchanged.

Proof of ability to re-pay such loans is also normally sought by the lenders.

The Financial Conduct Authority would not give me any guidance to pass on to councilors. Instead, they

commented that they have departments that deal with non-compliant operations, and they suggested they

would carry out an investigation to ensure any loans from the PC were carried out in a correct manner.

Whilst it is true that TPC does not need to be registered with the FCA to lend money, it does have to abide by

its own sets of rules which may be found in the Local Government Act namely: -

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1. The clerk / council needs to have a qualification called “General power of competence”
2. The loan needs to be for the benefit of the whole community
3. There needs to be a certain percentage of ELECTED councilors to vote for any loans, not co-opted
4. In addition, Declarations of interest should be recorded for all councilors also involved with the TCLT

Could you please provide by return as soon as possible written answers to the following questions as well as

any hard copy documentary evidence of the following: -

1. Does the Thorverton Parish Council currently hold a Certificate proving General Power of Competence?
2. Does the TPC clerk currently hold a relevant financial certificate? If so are you able to provide a copy?
3. Please explain how any existing loans actually benefit the whole community?
4. Please identify and name each individual elected and co-opted councilors on TPC
5. Please provide details and banks statements detailing all or any payments regarding TCLT business,

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including payees, payment dates and amounts

6. Please explain the reason why TPC decided to lend money without providing any (personal)

guarantees or putting any formal lending procedures in place.

7. Has TPC received any written information from the TCLT explaining how it intends to guarantee re-

payment of any loans from TPC. If so, please provide me with a copy

8. Are you able to confirm if the TPC has been approached by the CLT for additional lending and if so,

how much, over what time period and how would the TCLT envisage re-paying any further loans

I would also like to comment that if the TCLT has the same Chairman as the PC I feel that this is a very, very

serious conflict of interest which should concern all councilors.

According to the minutes found on the TCLT web site, there are no confirmed or secured funds from housing

associations, no grants approved from MDDC, no business plans or budgets in the public domain and no

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development loans from banks. I also note, worryingly, according to the TPC minutes, loans made to TCLT are yet to have been repaid.

Third email

I hope you had a nice Christmas and wish you a Happy New Year.

I have copied this letter to all Parish Councillors, the Monitoring officer at MDDC and our

local MDDC councillor. Please could you all confirm by email you have received this

letter. Thank you.

-Could you please explain why Thorverton Parish Council (TPC) has not responded to

my email and letter of the 12 th December 2024? Thank you.

-Could you please let me know if TPC have been contacted by the Financial Conduct

Authority (FCA) yet?

If necessary, I can provide a reference number for my call to them.

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-Could you please arrange for the minutes of your last TPC meeting to be put online at the TPC homepage. They are clearly ready as they have already posted on the village community noticeboard some days ago. (Prior to Christmas) A sceptic might say you are trying to avoid the monitoring officer or the FCA from seeing them? Preparedness is king, and it is important that ALL members of THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL can pre-prepare for your next meeting. TPC councillors should not be disadvantaged. The TCLT should fully disclose its plans. Full disclosure will enable TPC to have valid discussions and make important financial decisions and judgements on these very serious financial matters. (Despite whether loans are approved or disapproved by the FCA and monitoring officer).

In the Interests of Openness, Honesty, and Integrity, is it possible to issue the

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following documents to all Parish Councillors, 7 DAYS in advance of your next meeting

on the 14th of Jan 2024?

1) A copy of the Thorverton Community Land Trusts (TCLTs) financial directors';

resignation letter, so, councillors are informed of his reasoning and concerns about the

TCLT

2) Copies of any documents sent to the sales agents of the Church Commissioners (I

believe Savilles?) Detailing the possible purchase of land in Silver Street, where and

what land is being bought and at what price?

3) A completed detailed budget for the TCLT housing scheme, showing capital investments, where the loans will be made, who any investors are Etc, Etc, including

projected Profit and Loss accounts.

4) Full copies of all plans for the TCLT, detailing sites to be used, value of properties etc,

both North and South Sides.

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- 5) Detailed financial reports on how the TCLT expects to repay the £8k+ already borrowed from TPC
- 6) Copies of any grants the TCLT is entering into with MDDC as there will be constraints on how this grant money can be used.
- 7) Details of all the Directors of TCLT, Names and addresses for correspondence.

MDDC Grants

Grants are given with many qualifying criteria with which, the borrower must comply.

It is my understanding that grants cannot be used to repay debts /payments made in the past, only for payments going forward.

In other words, all payments made in 2024 by the TPC on behalf of TCLT cannot be

refunded to TPC legally with new grant money.

An alternative refunding mechanism needs to be found immediately.

Similarly, if extra funds are provided by TPC now for solicitors' fees for a land purchase

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they may not be refundable unless the grant is made and paid out by MDDC before the loan is sanctioned and actioned.

.
I cannot understand how the TPC councillors can be expected to take risks and make such important financial decisions, unless armed with all the information above.

Also, can the TCLT please explain what would happen to any land purchased, if the

TCLT went into liquidation? – The TPC is being asked to pay legal fees, how would the

TCLT ensure TPC was not legally bound by association to complete any purchase?

Is it possible perhaps, to ensure that the TPC would retain the land for securing a “green belt” for the village if a liquidation did occur?

Clerk's reply

I am writing this email in response to the various emails you have sent and/or copied me into regarding the Affordable Housing project in Thorverton.

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At the outset I would point out that your continued preference for demanding replies to long and detailed emails in unfeasibly short timescales is mildly irritating and I request that you stop. As I have told you before, the Parish Clerk role in Thorverton is 9 hours per week and is busy all the time. You also do not need to ask that your email is circulated to all Councillors as all correspondence is circulated except for the most routine/mundane items.

Having said that, I thank you for your good wishes for my Christmas and New Year and I hope that 2025 brings health and happiness to you and yours.

To your various points:

Your email of 12th December is only being replied to now because I took two week's much-needed holiday over Christmas and the New Year.

I have not received any communication from the Financial Conduct Authority at the time of writing.

December's minutes are now available on the website. I normally upload them the same day that the copy is put on the noticeboard but could not access the TPC website in December. Our hosting company had changed the access password and the new one they sent did not work (I believe they are time-

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limited). I am pleased to say that full access is now restored. A sceptic would be quite idiotic to say that minutes that are clearly displayed on a public noticeboard, and available electronically from the clerk by request at any time, are being hidden from anyone.

I have forwarded your email to the Company Secretary and Chairman of the Thorverton Community Land Trust (TCLT) to answer your request for documents, policies etc. TCLT is a separate entity and the documents you quote will not be relevant to the Parish Council meeting. Any contracts entered into by TCLT will be their responsibility and cannot incur liability for the Parish Council.

MDDC Grant and Affordable Housing Funding

I would like to explain the situation in more detail as your interpretation is incorrect on so many different matters.

History to date:

Thorverton Parish Council formed a working group to advance the idea of provision of Affordable Housing in the village. This consisted of 3 Cllrs, myself and one local resident. This group was called TAHG (Thorverton Affordable Housing Group).

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After open village meetings and a Housing Needs Survey TAHG was confident that the project had a good deal of support in the community. An important step would be to set up a Community Land Trust.

Consultations with MDDC gave rise to the advice that there were 3 stages of grant available. TPC applied for the Stage 1 grant and received £2,500. This was received without conditions but has been spent on the working group's costs.

To accelerate the project professional surveys and advice were needed. TAHG advised the Council of the costs and requested funding beyond the Stage 1 grant in expectation of a Stage 2 grant. These requests were made, resolved and minuted at full Council meetings in the usual manner. With the exception of £77.94 website hosting all the expenditure was committed prior to the incorporation of the CLT even if the invoices were not received until after incorporation.

Thus, for clarification, the Parish Council has not lent any money to the CLT but has funded its own working group in anticipation of grant funding in the correct and usual manner. The CLT is fully aware of this and will transfer the funds outstanding (£5,086.80) on receipt of the Stage 2 grant.

Current proposal for the Parish Council to consider

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TCLT are able to apply for funding from a grant that will be unavailable after March 2025. In order to give the best chance of receiving the grant TCLT asked that the Parish Council consider underwriting the costs of legal services to ensure that the grant is correctly obtained. With insufficient funds at the current time TCLT did not want to approach a solicitor without knowing that the expected bill of £10-£20,000 would be paid when presented. The request to the PC was as a safety-net as all indications are that a grant would be approved by MDDC and received long before the full legal costs are invoiced.

After a brief discussion at December's Parish Council meeting it is clear that many Councillors require guarantees of the grant availability etc and to be clear on the Parish Council's powers for such an arrangement before continuing. That is how things stand prior to January's meeting.

I trust this clarifies the position of the Parish Council and you can see that all decisions are being taken in an appropriate and customary manner.

Copy of email sent to MDDC Monitoring Officer

Thank you for acknowledging my recent email regarding miss appropriation of council funds by Thorverton Parish Council.

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I have copied the clerk in with this email.

If the clerk has not responded fully within 5 days and the funds taken are not returned to TPC within 10 days of writing, i will lodge a formal complaint with you.

I think this gives the clerk and chairman time to sort themselves and the repayment out.

The original email was sent to give you notification of the problem, with the hope that TCLT would refund the TPC post haste.

Hopefully I won't need to contact you again.

Fourth email

Dear Darren,

Thank you for your reply.

9 hours is no issue to me. There are still many unanswered questions.

Your sarcasm is ecliptic and should be moderated.

I will see you soon.

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Fifth email

As our village clerk and a Director of the Thorverton Community Land Trust, could you please confirm whether the TCLT now has a legal repayment vehicle set up to re-pay the outstanding monies lent by the Parish Council to the TCLT?

As 3 weeks or so have now passed since the last meeting, I guess this has been organised by now?

If so, could you please give me full details?

If this re-payment is to be covered by the Grant from MDDC for £17k +/-, could you please forward a copy including any special dispensations the TCLT may have negotiated with MDDC to enable back payment of the loans to TPC.

I trust this letter is not too long or complicated for you to respond to in your 9 hours a week.

If you have not organised a legal repayment of the loan, a simple "NO" will suffice.

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I have given a generous 3 week period to see if the TCLT has managed to rectify the embarrassing position it has put the TPC into, before writing in detail my complaints to the FCA.

I sincerely hope the situation has been resolved.

6.3 Various emails from correspondent three

First email

I am writing to put forward my concerns about the Parish Council's 'underwriting' or 'lending' of Council funds to the Thorverton Community Land Trust. I would add that I have no issues with the TCLT as an organisation. I do, however, have issues with the Council lending public funds to an organisation that has no guarantee in place to repay the debt. Worryingly, I have been unable, to date, to identify any power or legislation that legally allows the Council to lend to any organisation at all. The minutes do not mention any legal advice having been

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taken by the Council, any contract or loan agreement being in place prior to the lending, or under what legislation the funding has been lent. I do wonder how TCLT can be held to account if there is no contract or agreement in place, as there would be no obligation to repay the funds. The Council has lent approximately £8,000 to TCLT so far, with further lending to be considered at the January 2025 meeting. Before this takes place I urge the Council to seek legal advice, and to put a contract in place, if not already done. The Council has a 'duty of care' to ensure that public funds are spent lawfully, so it is key to consider how the public might view any such decision making. I wonder whether sufficient consideration was given to the thoughts of the wider community prior to the lending going ahead. I don't recall a public meeting being held to ask for public opinion. I have further concerns about the same person being the Chairman of both organisations as this would suggest a conflict of interest, especially as lending is involved. Also, the meeting minutes (until December 2024) do not

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record any 'declarations of interest' from councillors who are members of TCLT. Such matters are important for a Council to get right and so need addressing. I recommend that, as a matter of priority, Council members revisit the rules and regulations around 'declaring an interest,'together with the implications of not doing so.

As it is not clear from Council budget records, or the meeting minutes, from which 'pot' the TCLT lending has come from, it would be useful to have that clarified. Presumably, 'general funds' have been used and I do hope that funds set aside for ongoing and specific projects, like the new Cemetery, have not be touched.

I am one of many members of the community who are genuinely concerned about the TCLT lending. Whilst it is hoped that the TCLT grant funding will soon materialise in order to repay the public funds, queries around the processes used by the Council in this regard, and the lack of transparency, continue to be raised.

I don't expect a reply to this letter as I fully appreciate how busy the Clerk is. I do, however, expect the Council

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to take into consideration my comments prior to any further discussion on TCLT matters.

Clerk's reply

Thank you for your letter which will be circulated and your comments taken into account as you request.

I think it would help to clarify that no money has been lent to the TCLT, but the Parish Council has funded its Affordable Housing working group as it funds many working groups.

History to date:

Thorverton Parish Council formed a working group to advance the idea of provision of Affordable Housing in the village. This consisted of 3 Cllrs, myself and one local resident. This group was called TAHG (Thorverton Affordable Housing Group).

After open village meetings and a Housing Needs Survey TAHG was confident that the project had a good deal of support in the community. An important step would be to set up a Community Land Trust.

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was received without conditions but has been spent on the working group's costs.

To accelerate the project professional surveys and advice were needed. TAHG advised the Council of the costs and requested funding beyond the Stage 1 grant in expectation of a Stage 2 grant. These requests were made, resolved and minuted at full Council meetings in the usual manner. With the exception of £77.94 website hosting all the expenditure was committed prior to the incorporation of the CLT even if the invoices were not received until after incorporation.

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PC was as a safety-net as all indications are that a grant would be approved by MDDC and received long before the full legal costs are invoiced.

After a brief discussion at December's Parish Council meeting it is clear that many Councillors require guarantees of the grant availability etc and to be clear on the Parish Council's powers for such an arrangement before continuing. That is how things stand prior to January's meeting.

I am asking DALC about the powers for the Council to act in this way but I suspect, without General Power of Competence, there won't be any such powers and the Council will be unable to proceed.

As far as Interests are concerned I would point out that the TCLT is entirely voluntary and there are no pecuniary interests whatsoever for any of the Cllrs involved (or me for that matter). I do support mentioning the roles of the Cllrs, although Cllr Uglow is the PC's representative on the TCLT board as that is the nature of its constitution (similar to the PC's rep on the TMH board).

I hope this allays the fears expressed in your letter.

Second Email

Unfortunately, my concerns remain unchanged. It will be interesting to see what happens on Monday.

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Third Email

After reading the January draft meeting minutes please can you consider the following changes:

1. Cllr Nightingale - remove 'Cllr' throughout the minutes when relating to Shirley as she stopped being a Cllr when she resigned last October (a cllrs resignation can not be withdrawn).
2. Public Open Session - input what I actually said 'a member of the public asked Council whether proper practices had been followed when Cllr Nightingale had resigned as, if so, the co- option process would need to take place.'
3. Correspondence - there is no mention of the discussion between Maggie, me and the Council towards the end of the evening for some reason. So, to enable the minutes to be a true reflection of the meeting, you could insert something like '2 members of the public enquired as to why no correspondence was listed on the agenda when at least 4 letters had been received for Council consideration prior to the agenda being published. The Chairman replied that all the queries raised had been covered during the meeting. The residents did not

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agree with this and asked the Council to be more open and transparent with future correspondence and general information as this could help reduce the number of letters being received and help with public understanding.'

Obviously, up to you Jim but I think the above would provide a better 'reflection' of the meeting. No need to respond, I know you are busy and I will go with what you decide.

It's not easy being a Clerk is it!

Thanks very much 😊 and keep positive,

6.4 Email re PC involvement with TCLT

First email

PC Involvement in TCLT Issues

Having re-read the PC Minutes of 9/12/24 posted on the village notice board (but are still not

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available on the TPC website, a month after the meeting), we wish to raise several issues to be discussed and responded to at the next PC meeting, scheduled for the 14/1/25. I note that minute 12.2. tasked the clerk with researching the legality of subsidising/underwriting TCLT and "other ways" in which the PC can support social housing in Thorverton.

I hope the clerk will be providing Councillors with a written report on his findings and recording the additional hours taken, presumably to be paid for by the TPC. During the 9/12 meeting, though not at the correct juncture, I see that it was minuted that the Chair,

Councillor Uglow and the Clerk, retrospectively declared an interest as stakeholders/officers in TCLT. Why weren't similar declarations made at previous TPC meetings? Isn't it time to consider that the Chair and officers of the TPC should be completely independent of the of the TCLT?

When minute 12.2 was discussed on 9/12/24 it appears no voting was recorded and I assume that all Councillors present supported the tasking of the clerk to do "extra curricular work"? Surely those two afore mentioned Councillors should at least have abstained in order to avoid the obvious

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conflict of interest?

Is it not time for those Councillors with a possible vested interest in an ambitious speculative housing project, to consider their positions on Thorverton Parish Council?

It is after all, the role of the TPC to be seen as working for the benefit of the whole village community and delivering on its obligations to complete longstanding existing projects such as the new cemetery - assuming that the £27,500 ring fenced funds are still in place?

I look forward to hearing the Council discuss these issues.

Clerk's reply

Further to my short reply earlier today I wanted to add some clarification.

History of the PC-CLT link to date:

Thorverton Parish Council formed a working group to advance the idea of provision of Affordable Housing in the village. This consisted of 3 Cllrs, myself and one local resident. This group was called TAHG (Thorverton Affordable Housing Group).

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After open village meetings and a Housing Needs Survey TAHG was confident that the project had a good deal of support in the community. An important step would be to set up a Community Land Trust.

Consultations with MDDC gave rise to the advice that there were 3 stages of grant available. TPC applied for the Stage 1 grant and received £2,500. This was received without conditions but has been spent on the working group's costs.

To accelerate the project professional surveys and advice were needed. TAHG advised the Council of the costs and requested funding beyond the Stage 1 grant in expectation of a Stage 2 grant. These requests were made, resolved and minuted at full Council meetings in the usual manner. With the exception of £77.94 website hosting all the expenditure was committed prior to the incorporation of the CLT even if the invoices were not received until after incorporation.

Thus, for clarification, the Parish Council has not lent any money to the CLT but has funded its own working group in anticipation of grant funding in the correct and usual manner. The CLT is fully aware of this and will transfer the funds outstanding (£5,086.80) on receipt of the Stage 2 grant.

Current proposal for the Parish Council to consider

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TCLT are able to apply for funding from a grant that will be unavailable after March 2025. In order to give the best chance of receiving the grant TCLT asked that the Parish Council consider underwriting the costs of legal services to ensure that the grant is correctly obtained. With insufficient funds at the current time TCLT did not want to approach a solicitor without knowing that the expected bill of £10-£20,000 would be paid when presented. The request to the PC was as a safety-net as all indications are that a grant would be approved by MDDC and received long before the full legal costs are invoiced.

After a brief discussion at December's Parish Council meeting it is clear that many Councillors require guarantees of the grant availability etc and to be clear on the Parish Council's powers for such an arrangement before continuing. That is how things stand prior to January's meeting.

Cllr Interests

I would point out that the TCLT is entirely voluntary and there are no pecuniary interests whatsoever for any of the Cllrs involved (or me for that matter). I do support mentioning the roles of the Cllrs, although Cllr Uglow is the PC's representative on the TCLT board as that is the nature of its constitution (similar to the PC's rep on the TMH board). I cannot see how this causes any conflict as there is no financial gain to the Cllrs from either role. Clerks, of

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course, do not register their interests and could be said to have an interest in every agenda item as that is how their salary is earned.

I should emphasise that, far from distancing itself from TCLT, the Parish Council initiated the whole project after the fiasco that was the affordable housing element of the Leonard Square development, and hopes to work closely in support of the TCLT to help deliver the project. I agree it is ambitious, but it is absolutely not speculative in any way.

Clerk's hours

I was asked to investigate the Council's position in this matter. That is normal work for a clerk and takes its place in the many and varied actions I am tasked with at each meeting. It is certainly not "extra curricular work". No mention was made of additional hours for me and I do not think they will be required for this task. I would like you both to be aware that I have only ever claimed 5 additional hours (to date) and that was for a 22-page complicated Freedom of Information request.

New Cemetery

Finally, I can confirm that the reserves of £27,422 are still ringfenced for the new cemetery and clearly shown in Thorverton's accounts.

I hope this clarifies the situation and allays the fears expressed in your letter.

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Second email

Thank you for your reply to our letter addressed to TPC dated 7th January, 2025. Sadly your attempt to allay our fears, or to answer the specific questions we raised, creates even more concern over the lack of proper governance and procedures being operated by TPC currently.

We asked for our concerns to be discussed at the upcoming TPC meeting on Tuesday and were surprised to receive a pre-emptive response from you personally?

Can you kindly circulate this email and your response, to all Councillors in advance of the meeting, when we hope it will then be discussed under 'Correspondence'.

6.5 Email from correspondent four re Waste Bin at Leigh Gardens & 20mph limit

I noticed that the Leigh Gardens Litter Bin has been moved to the entrance to the Millennium Green. I was talking to a neighbour about this. She very kindly regularly picks up litter in the Gardens and up to recently has been able to deposit it in the Litter Bin in the corner of the gardens. I also have regularly

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used the bin for any litter picked up whilst walking in the village on the way back to Milford Lane. I have also noted that the bin has been regularly used in that position.

However, the bin has now been removed. Can it be returned to its original position in the gardens where it is needed?

I understand that a second dog bin has been requested for the Millennium Green, but removing one of the other village bins only makes the problem of litter and dog mess worse in other areas of the village.

So can the bin please be brought back to its original position.

I see that litter bins were on the agenda of the January council meeting, but as the minutes have not been published at the time of writing this email, I don't know what was decided.

Speed limit in the Centre of the Village.

I have previously requested that the speed limit in the centre of the village be reduced from 30 to 20mph for general safety reasons, including children , pedestrians. But I understand that the Council is unable to afford this, nor

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Twentys Plenty signs. Can I ask the Council to keep pursuing this matter with the Highways dept or whoever.

Thank- you for your consideration of these matters.

I have already spoken to Cllr Bry Uglow re these two matters but thought to explain further in writing.

7 Projects

7.1 Thorverton in Bloom

7.2 Wildflower verges

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7.3 New Cemetery

Cemetery Working Group Minutes

MINUTES OF THE CEMETERY WORKING GROUP 21 st Jan 2025.

1. Planning. Cllr hodge had been in contact with MDDC about the process for planning but had not had a reply. He will chase it. The assumption is that TPC will have to reapply if this is the case then TPC asked to resolve that the reapplication go ahead and any monies due to MDDC be paid. There was a further discussion on access for hearses to turn at the new cemetery. Rev Collins said that funeral directors did not like reversing down Dark Lane. Any turning area in the new cemetery would take up a lot of room. It was concluded that any resubmission for planning should still be based on the original planning submission.
2. IT was confirmed that the cheque for the purchase of the land was signed at the January TPC

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meeting. Michael would speak to solicitor to confirm whether it had been received.

3. It was confirmed that TPC resolved to accept a specific quotation for the fencing works.

There is no indication that an order with the successful contractor had been placed by TPC.

There was a discussion as to whether this should wait until planning had been received

however the contract with the vendor states that the fencing should be erected within one

month. However the vendor understands time constraints of getting this organised and is

happy for it to be erected as soon as practicable after purchase of the land.

Suggest that

TPC place an order ASAP so that the work can go ahead.

4. Andrew Saunders an architect confirmed that as asked previously he would be happy to

carry out working drawings for the new cemetery. Following the January TPC meeting

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minutes point 6.1.7 the working group asked Andrew to send the working group costings for the work which will be sent to TPC. If TPC find these acceptable then the working group would like the Council to resolve to accept his costs and to formally ask him to continue with drawings and liase with the working group. The drawings to consist of layouts for the graves and other areas in the cemetery, paths, entrance gates, Landscaping, grounds maintenance.

5. The working group had various discussions regarding proposed cemetery rules and these will be continued at later meetings. Rev Collins was very helpful in this matter and will send a copy of the Churchyard rules.

6. There were discussions on the layout for graves, and other areas such as internment of ashes. Rev Collins could give useful insight into how Churchyards work. These will continue.

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7. Rev Collins will send the working group details of how the closure of a Churchyard will be formally handled. It was confirmed that a Churchyard cannot be formally closed until there are no available spaces for burial.

8. A suggestion for the name of the new cemetery was PARISH CEMETERY. To be finally decided by TPC

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS FOR TPC.

From item 1 Reapply for planning permission based on the original planning application including any payment to MDDC

From item 3 Place an order with the chosen fencing contractor.

From item 4 If TPC are happy with the costings from the architect suggested by the working group

then accept him to carry out the work and liaise with the working group.

From item 8 the working group suggested a name for the cemetery if TPC are happy with that name

please confirm by resolution.

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7.4 Exeter Inn Asset of Community Value

Notice of Intention to Dispose (from MDDC)

Localism Act 2011 – Community Right to Bid – The Assets of Community Value
(England) Regulations 2012

Ref: 24/00005/ACV

The Exeter Inn, Bullen Street, Thorverton

Notice under section 95(2) of the Localism Act 2011 has been received in
respect of the above property/land

We have received notification of the owner's intention to dispose of the above
asset. As parish council you are entitled to be advised of this notice.

The start of the six week interim moratorium is 24th January 2025 ending on 7th
March 2025. Unless an exemption applies the owner/s will now only be
able to dispose of the asset after the specified window of time has
expired. This is an initial six-week interim period, during which any valid
community group can express interest in bidding.

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Moratorium procedure:

The first window is a period of 6 weeks, i.e. the Interim Moratorium period as above. This time allows community interest groups to express an interest in bidding for the asset. If a written request is received by a valid community interest group, the moratorium period will be extended to be 6 months in total. If no request is received, the moratorium will end after the initial 6 weeks and the owner will be able to sell to whomever he/she chooses.

The full moratorium is designed to give local community groups time to raise the funds to purchase the asset. During this period the owners are allowed to market the property and negotiate sales, but they cannot exchange contracts or enter into a binding contract to do so later. The only exception to this is that they may sell to a community interest group during the moratorium period. There is no community right to *buy* the asset, just to *bid*. This means that the local community bid may not be the successful one. The owner/s can, at the end of the moratorium, sell to whomever they choose and at whatever price.

Following the moratorium period they will be free to sell to whomever they choose and no further moratorium will apply for the remainder of a

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protected period lasting 18 months (running from the same start date of when the owner notified the local authority of wishing to sell).

Please note that if the owner has incurred loss or expense as a result of the asset being listed they have a right to claim compensation for this loss/expense.

7.5 Affordable Housing

7.6 Allotments

7.7 School Field Report

Since the last report written on 12 th January 2024, we have kept the woodland area clear and have developed it further and are continuing to use the land for teaching and after-school clubs.
Maintenance and Management of the Land

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A working party of parents and families from school and the pre-school keep the woodland area clear throughout the year. The paths have been kept clear. Working together, school and pre-school have used logs and donations of old wooden cupboards to create different focus areas, including an area for a camp fire and an area for a mud kitchen. There have been no accidents on the land this year.

Activities Undertaken this Year

The Exe Valley Federation has a new Outdoor Education expert who leads sessions with Thorverton children. She has taken over from the Outdoor Education Lead in September. Both of them have used (and continue to use) the woodland area for several outdoor learning days. They use the forest area for team-building and confidence-building activities with the children, as well as for developing outdoor skills such as fire lighting and woodworking.

Each class has used the forest to develop areas of the curriculum, such as literacy, maths, science, spiritual reflection and stillness as well as bringing some of the topic sessions to life. Here are some examples of our day-

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to-day use of the area:

The Reception children continue to be taught one afternoon a week in the forest; teachers can see the benefits in the well-being and behaviour of the children, as well as in the development of their fine motor skills.

Class 1 have used it to inspire artwork, including bark rubbings. They used it extensively in topics on the natural world around us. They also used the area for a weather watching project in the summer.

Class 2 have also used the woodland amongst other things for an art project creating pictures using leaves and sticks.

In Class 3, groups of children have carried out maths activities, such as measuring and data collection. They also used the woodland for inspiration for artwork.

Class 4 have used the area for projects on the natural world, comparing the plant life in the woods to plants in the millennium green.

SEND children have regular sessions in the forest area to explore textures and feelings as well as develop outdoor

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skills such as fire-lighting, sawing wood and whittling objects. In the popular extra-curricular forest activities club children have created temporary artwork with leaves and sticks, made bird feeders and natural Christmas decorations and constructed bug hotels and hedgehog hideaways, as well as making temporary dens. The extra-curricular gardening club enjoyed some picnics in the newly renovated seating area. The Pre-school use the woodland two to three times a week, weather permitting, for all sorts of activities. Each session, when deemed appropriate, has an associated risk assessment. The school insurance policy covers the area of land. As a school, we believe that it is vital for the children to learn outside within many aspects of our curriculum, and this area enables us to do this. We are very grateful for the continued use of the area. This year, we are continuing to make greater use of the outside area by providing a planned Outdoor Learning Curriculum

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for children across the school. This is still part of the school's Strategic Plan and Federation Development Plan.

We intend to continue with these forest school and cross-curricular activities in the coming year in collaboration with the Parish Council and grant applications. We are very grateful to the PTFA for their continuing donations, which have enabled us to purchase items for use in our outdoor education teaching. The school community is very grateful to the Parish Council for their ongoing support for the school.

8 Recreation Ground

8.1 Financial Report for January

8.2 Repairs to the Rocker

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8.3 Signage

Email from Cllr Price

Can I suggest we get a similar sign for the rec ground. Not every item is necessary but the address/what three words and contact info looked like a good suggestion to me.



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8.4 Damage from footballs

Email from resident

We are sorry to be writing to you, but we would very much like your help with a problem we've recently encountered.

We live at Higher Dunsaller on the edge of Thorverton and our annex (known as the Stables) backs onto the western edge of the Recreation Ground. It is almost directly behind the goal at the western end of the football pitch (see photo 1).

We recently discovered a leak in the roof of the Stables. It appears to have been caused by a football or footballs hitting the vent for the bathroom fan on the southern aspect of the roof, causing it to lean away from the pitch and lift the lead flashing (see photo 2)



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Several tiles along the southern edge of the roof have been cracked (see photo 2) and last week we replaced nine cracked tiles on the eastern edge of the roof. Photo 3 shows a particularly badly damaged tile before it was replaced. Tiles on the roof of our woodshed have also been damaged, presumably also by footballs which are frequently kicked over the Stables and land in our garden and driveway.

The plaster on the eastern wall of the Stables has also been cracked in numerous places and large parts of it are blown, and it needs to be replaced in its entirety (see photos 4 and 5).

Repairing this damage will be expensive. We have been quoted £7,293 + VAT to repair the southern aspect of the roof



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and £6,665.10 + VAT to re-plaster the eastern wall. We have little choice but to repair the leak in the roof now as not to do so will only result in additional damage and cost, and this work is already underway. However, we are concerned about further damage from footballs (both to the vent and the tiles) and there is no point re-plastering the eastern wall until we find a way of protecting the building.

The only solution we can think of that would be effective without being an eyesore would be to install netting equivalent to that behind the goal at the eastern end of the football pitch. However, we would be open to any other solutions you can think of that would minimise the risk of this happening again.

We very much want to be good neighbours to the Recreation Ground and to Thorverton FC and we are not asking for a contribution to repair the damage that has already been done. However, we simply can't afford for this to happen again, so we are asking for your help to find a solution. We would be very happy to discuss this or to provide any additional information that would be helpful. Many thanks,



8.5 Testing of lights for Devon Air Ambulance

Email from DAA

...The re-survey is undertaken each year as part of our requirements to ensure the continuing safety of our helicopters, crew and patients and that nothing has substantially changed as far as any potential obstacles or height of trees, access etc.

We have been advised that to assist with the long term maintenance of the lights, the lights should ideally be switched on a monthly basis and then left on for up to an hour (or whatever is practicable for your site. The manual override switch should be located by the electric box and please remember to turn it back off!) If you find that one of the lighting units has stopped working, or there are any issues that you notice, please email landingsites@daat.org. If a light isn't working, we can make the site a temporary 'dark site' and inform our pilots of the situation who will still be able to use the site until the lights are fixed.

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9 Grounds Maintenance

9.1 Contractor Work for the month

10 Planning & Consultations

Planning Decision

10.1 NO OBJECTION 24/01768/CAT Reduction to copper beech tree

Consultations

10.2.1 MDDC Call for Sites Deadline 14th March 2025

[Mid Devon Call for Sites 2025](#)

06-02-2025 03:05 PM GMT

Mid Devon District Council is launching a new Call for Sites, from 6 February - 14 March 2025.

Whilst changes are underway with the wider planning system, Mid Devon wishes to refresh its understanding of land availability across the district since the previous call for sites was undertaken in early 2021. This will help the Council understand the most recent information on available sites across Mid Devon and help inform the development of its Local Plan. The development potential of sites put forward during the Call will be assessed by local authority officers and a panel of representatives from a range of industries. Those that submitted sites during the 2021 process have been contacted directly.

The conclusions will be published in a 'Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (HELAA). The HELAA will form part of the evidence base for a new Local Plan for Mid Devon.



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10.2.2 Cadbury Ward Parishes

Suggestions for 5th March meeting agenda and attendees

Email from District Cllr Roberts

Recently the governing party at MDDC resolved to create a new cabinet position, that being a Cabinet Member for Parish and Community Engagement. Councillor Gwen Duchesne accepted the invitation to take on the new role and has in turn, kindly accepted my invitation to meet with all the parish councils in my ward.

Therefore, it's with pleasure I extend an invitation to you all to attend a meeting with Gwen and I on the 5th of March at 5pm, the location is yet to be confirmed but is likely to be, availability accepting, the Memorial Hall, Thorverton.

We are currently putting together a meaningful agenda to distribute beforehand and will happily consider any suggested topics you may wish to discuss. At present I am anticipating the meeting to extend to approximately 90mins but more importantly, Gwen will have the

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opportunity to discuss her new role and the plans to improve community engagement between MDDC and the community at large.

Due to the time planned for the meeting and to ensure we develop a meaningful and engaged session, regrettably we can only accept up to 3 representatives per Parish Council on this occasion but will listen to feedback on the night if you felt a follow up meeting be worthwhile.

I hope to welcome representatives from all our parish councils in the Cadbury Ward on the 5th March, please confirm your attendance beforehand to David Parker, democratic services officer, MDDC who will also be attending the meeting and his email address is included in the distribution list of this communication.

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10.2.3 Community Risk Register

Email from MDDC

I have attached the register to this e-mail. If you could bring it to one of your meetings or send it round to your Parish Councillors so that they can review and comment on it.

The plan as attached has been created by the District Councillors.

What I would like to know is:

- Are there any risks missing?
- Do you agree with the scores?

I have also included the guidance for the scores on the document. If you could please come back to me with any comments by 28th of February that would be very helpful.

The register can be viewed by [following this link](#).

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11 Review of Council Policies

11.1 Handling of Communications Policy

Current policy (2022)

[Please follow this link for the Handling of Correspondence Policy](#)

11.2 Standing Orders

[Please follow this link to view the Standing Orders](#)

11.3 Training Policy

Current policy (2019)

[Please follow this link for the Training Policy](#)

12 Finance

12.1 Bank balance as at 31 December 2024 £63,918.63
(£37,696.09 + £26,222.54)

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12.2 Appointment of Internal Auditor

Contract with the Auditor

Letter of Engagement 2025

Thank you for enquiry. The purpose of this letter is to set out the basis on which your Council would engage me.

My role as your Internal Auditor is to be a 'critical friend'. I will look through your Parish's processes and procedures and, where necessary, will make recommendations which I hope, will help improve the council's governance. Some of these recommendations will be long-term goals, others may need to be implemented more quickly, but I will be available as part of the audit process to help guide you through what is needed.

This letter confirms the basis on which I will provide services to you to avoid any misunderstandings of our respective responsibilities.

Internal Audit of the Council The primary objectives of internal audit are:
i. to review, appraise and report upon the adequacy of governance and internal control systems operating throughout the council. To achieve this, I will adopt a predominantly systems-based approach to the audit

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ii. to carry out an annual inspection of the books and records of the council

The council is responsible for supplying all documents requested.

Timescales for the effective and efficient method of completing the audit are as follows:

i. ensure that the process laid down within this engagement letter is acceptable

ii. sign the engagement form on the last page and return that page by email. (Please send this by the end of February to give time for completion of the checklist.)

A checklist will then be forwarded. This should be completed and returned with any documents requested by 31 st March. This will then be checked prior to the review meeting.

A review meeting will be arranged, either in person or via online meeting platforms, to discuss the completed checklist and clarify any queries. If further meetings are required, these may be chargeable.

The draft, electronic, editable, version, of the AGAR must be sent to me by 31 May.

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I will check the final Accounting Statement figures (Section 2) of the AGAR provided all is in order, I will then complete the Internal Audit section and return it electronically.

Note: Please do not complete Section 1 of the AGAR until the council meeting to consider the AGAR.

An Annual Report will be issued with the AGAR with any action points. If timescales are not observed, this will attract extra charges over and above the quoted fee as laid down below.

Scope of Work

Predominantly internal audit will review the governance of the council culminating in the completion of the Internal Audit Report as stated above. I will identify if the following key areas are in place and working satisfactorily.

- a. Proper book-keeping
- b. Payment controls in relation to financial regulations
- c. Review of the internal controls, which will include:
 - i. The council risk assessment
 - ii. Review of the effectiveness of internal financial control

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iii. An overall review of your internal controls

d. Budgetary controls

e. Income controls

f. Petty cash procedures (if applicable)

g. Payroll controls

h. Asset controls

i. Bank reconciliations

j. Accounting statements and application of spending powers

k. Exemption criteria (if applicable)

l. Website, transparency code and other relevant legislation

m. Public Rights notice and dates

n. Publication of previous AGAR

o. Review of the status of Trusts (if applicable)

And to support the above, a review of the following:

p. Policies

q. Completeness, approval and retention of minutes

r. General governance

s. Examination and completeness of audit action plans

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t. Year End procedures, which will include:

- i. Financial Statements review
- ii. Review of council balances
- iii. Analytical Review
- iv. Annual Return review

Roles and Responsibilities

My role as an internal auditor is one of independence. I must make it clear that I can in no way involve myself in the financial decision-making, appointments or any other areas that may give rise to conflicts of interest.

The Council Responsibilities

The council, supported by the Responsible Financial Officer / Proper Officer, has clearly defined responsibilities for risk management, internal control, internal audit and the prevention of fraud and corruption.

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The existence of internal audit does not diminish the responsibility of the council to establish systems of internal control to ensure that activities are conducted in a secure and well-ordered manner.

Fees and Charges

Fees based on precept or projected income and expenditure – whichever is highest.

Precept / Income or Expenditure Fees 2025

Under £25,000 £70.00

£25,001 – £100,000 £85.00

£100,001 & above £95.00

The above fees are on the understanding that all requests for documents and responses to my internal audit checklist are provided by the council within the required timescales.

Additional Charges

Late submission of documents, including the AGAR (no later than 31 May)

£45.00 surcharge

Mileage £0.45 per mile

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Additional meetings £35.00 per hour

Payment is required on invoice once the work is completed.

Requests for attendance at Council Meetings

I would be willing to attend a council meeting, given reasonable notice.

This gives the council an opportunity to ask me questions, clarify the scope and nature of the work I have undertaken and to make me aware of any issues that may be relevant as my cycle of internal audit progresses.

A nominal cost for this service is charged at £45.00 plus mileage.

Request for work outside the scope of Paragraphs 1 to 3

Any such request for extra audit time to be provided will be discussed at the time and will be subject to an appendix agreement.

Agreement of terms

Once agreed, and signed, this letter stands as effective until formal notice of termination is given by either party. Notice must be given before the audit cycle begins to avoid incurring charges.

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Please confirm your agreement to the terms of this letter of engagement in writing quoting the Minute Reference and date of meeting at which it was resolved by the end of March. Can be sent via email. I trust that this is acceptable to the council and look forward to hearing from you.

12.3 Payments:

12.3.1 Ben Fitch Invoice Number BF20240185	£ 103.98
12.3.2 PKF Littlejohn AGAR Review Services	£ 96.00
12.3.3 Thorverton WI Winter warmth (January)	£ 35.80
12.3.4 Wicksteed Rocker repair	£ 2,040.38
12.3.5 J P Roberts – clerk pay (January)	£ 456.89

13 Next Meeting Tuesday 11th March 2025