

**MINUTES OF
THORNLEY PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE COMMITTEE
THORNLEY VILLAGE CENTRE
2ND JULY 2015**

PRESENT

Councillors Mrs. J. Unsworth (Chair), M. McCoy, T. Unsworth,

APOLOGIES

<i>Councillor</i>	<i>Reason for Absence</i>	<i>Resolved</i>
<i>Mrs. P. English</i>	<i>Holiday</i>	<i>Approved</i>
<i>Mrs. P. Maddison</i>	<i>Work Commitments</i>	<i>Approved</i>

Meeting Commenced: 11:00am

37. Finance & Budgetary Control Reports

The Finance & Budgetary Control report detailing all income and expenditure since the last meeting and the current budget position was considered.

Resolved: ***That the report be accepted and that the Parish Clerk makes arrangements to settle any outstanding accounts.***

38. Christmas Tree Lighting

The Parish Clerk reported that the firm who had provided the original quotation of £2,228.00, to illuminate the Christmas tree outside the Village Centre had now advised that it would be necessary to increase it to £2,335.52 in view of the fact that the Parish Council had not accepted the second part of the quotation to illuminate the trees on the Village Green at a cost of £8,663.94¹.

Resolved: ***That the additional expenditure of £107.52 be approved***

39. Request for Donation

Thornley FC U13, a newly formed youth football team, which hired the Welfare Park from the Parish Council as its home pitch, requested sponsorship or a donation to help establish the team.

It was suggested that sponsorship of the team clothing, featuring the Parish Council Logo was a suitable option.

Resolved: ***That the Council in accordance with its powers under sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government act 1972, should incur the following expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure of £699.00.***

¹ Meeting held on 5th May 2015 minute18 refers.

40. Village Centre Accounts Software

The Village Centre Management Group requested a donation of £500 to meet the cost of providing a Facilities Booking and Account software package.

In addition they requested that the Parish Clerk be authorised to provide oversight, assistance and audit guidance if required, to ensure that the volunteer(s) operating the system used it effectively.

Resolved: *That the Council in accordance with its powers under sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government act 1972, should incur the following expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure of £500.0 and that the Parish Clerk be authorised to assist as required.*

41. Room Hire Fees for Parish Council Meetings.

It was pointed out that since meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees were now being held in the Village Centre which was operated by a Management Group, it would be necessary for the to pay the appropriate room hire fees.

Resolved: *That the payment of invoices submitted by the Village Centre Management Group for rooms hired by the Parish Council for any of its meetings throughout the year be approved.*

42. Allotments - Rent Consultation

The Parish Clerk provided background information and reminded members of previous decisions of the Council when trying to devise a fairer method to calculate annual allotment rents.

It was now proposed that every tenant be provided with the sizes of all allotments, calculated using Global Positioning Satellite information (GPS) and that they be asked to elect which of two methods they would prefer the Parish Council to adopt.

a) All rents should be based on the actual size of the allotment gardens. This would mean some tenants would pay less and some would pay more.

b) All rents should be the same even though some allotments are bigger than others.

All tenants would pay the same amount of rent – the status quo.

The majority decision of tenants, based on the results of the consultation process, would then form the basis on which the Parish Council could calculate the annual rents.

Resolved: *That all allotment tenants be consulted on the proposal as outlined asking them to vote on their preferred option for calculating annual rents.*

43. Any Additional Urgent Items of Business

In accordance with the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to information) Act, 1985, section 100B (4)(b), the Chair following consultation with the Proper Officer, agreed that the following items of business not shown on the agenda, be considered as a matter of urgency.

44. Council Tax Briefing

The Chair and Parish Clerk reported on an event organised by C.D.A.L.C in conjunction with Durham County Council on the Council Tax Base and Localisation of Council Tax Reduction Scheme on 24th June 2014.

All Parish Councillors had received an invitation to attend this important event which was presented by Paul Darby the County Treasurer.

It was noted that Thornley Parish Council's Precept Support Grant currently £19,095 was likely to reduce by 16% (approximately £3,000) for 2016/17, a further 13% in 2017/18 and an additional 13% in 2018/19 all of which would have a knock on effect when calculating budgets and Precept amounts.

Resolved: That the information be noted.

Meeting Terminated: 12:noon