

**MINUTES OF
THORNLEY PARISH COUNCIL
THORNLEY VILLAGE CENTRE
1ST MARCH 2016**

PRESENT

Councillors Mrs. J. Unsworth (Chair), Mrs. P. English, Mrs. K. Huntington, Mrs. A. Kelly, Mrs. P. Maddison, M. McCoy, T. Unsworth, G. Wilson.

County Councillor Nichols, County Councillor L. Hovells.

APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

PUBLIC

No members of the public were present.

Meeting Commenced 7:00 p.m.

161. Police Report

As no police were present a report was unavailable.

Resolved: That the information be noted.

162. Public Question and Answer Session

No members of the public were in attendance.

Resolved: That the information be noted.

163. Minutes of the Previous Parish Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held 12th January 2016 were approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

164. Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held 2nd February 2016 were approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

165. Matters Arising - Progress Report of the Parish Clerk

The Parish Clerk provided an update on current or outstanding issues.

Traffic Calming Measures B1279 outside St. Godric's School Wheatley Hill – D.C.C. had responded to previous requests stating that they were aware of the problems with the failing speed cushions and a scheme to replace them with asphalt ones had been ordered. The cushions were failing due to the construction of the road not providing sufficient strength for the chemical-fixed bolts to remain firm. They are hoping that the replacement cushions will be completed in the next two months.

Thornley Mini-roundabout Officers had met with representatives some time ago to discuss the position of the roundabout. At the site meeting the position was discussed and overhead images provided showed that the position had only slightly changed after the resurfacing. This position was not considered to be dangerous. It was noted that the main issue was motorists who were not slowing for the roundabout and that this was not due to the position of the roundabout but more a one of too much familiarity with the location and not expecting to have to give way. Unfortunately there were no measures that could be introduced which could overcome the complacency of motorists.

Dog Patrol Areas Additional information on this scheme was provided to members.

Resolved: *That the report be received.*

166. Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting

The draft minutes of the Finance Committee held on 2nd February 2016 were tabled for the information of members.

Resolved: *That the information be noted*

167. Unitary County Councillor

Councillor Morris Nichols & Councillor Lucy Hovells gave a comprehensive verbal report on the financial position of the County Council outlining the extremely difficult challenges being faced to reduce expenditure by £104 million by 2020 in order meet the financial target set by central government.

They also reported that 115 new dwellings, comprising 2 and 3 bedroom homes, bungalows and affordable houses were to be built on farmland adjacent to the A690 in the vicinity of Wheatley Hill and Thornley.

Councillor Nichols pointed out that he had received a request from the Trustees of the Thornley Village Centre for £3000 to fund an administrative position. Payment would be made via the A.A.P. in the new financial year.

He was also pursuing a request that a dog litter bin could be installed on the bridle way adjacent to the Welfare Park.

Newly appointed PC Terry Hall was endeavouring to consolidate a number of P.A.C.T. meetings taking place in the area in an attempt to streamline the process of addressing residents' concerns.

Councillor Hovells reported that the Police Commissioner would now administrate the funding for Young People's activities.

Members expressed concern regarding the poor street lighting on the Gore Hill Estate and Councillor Nichols agreed to raise the issue with the appropriate officer at D.C.C.

Members raised concern at the dangerous situation developing outside St. Godric's School caused by parents parking on the footpath and highway when dropping off/collecting children from school.

It was suggested this be raised with the Headmistress and P.C. Terry Hall to see if anything could be done to resolve the problem before an accident occurred.

Resolved: *That the report be received.*

Action: *Parish Clerk raises the issue with Headmistress of St. Godric's School and P.C. Hall.*

168. Risk Assessments

The Parish Clerk reported that no alterations or amendments were required.

Resolved: *That the information be noted.*

169. Delegates Report on CDALC Medium & Small Councils Forum

Councillor English gave a verbal report on the topics discussed at the meeting and highlighted that funding for the administrative officers post was to end shortly. It had also been pointed out that there was approximately £331k of Section 106 agreement funding still available for projects.

Resolved: *That the report be received.*

170. Delegates Report on Thornley Village Centre Management Group

Councillor Mrs. J. Unsworth reported on the continuing success of the centres operation and provided details of forthcoming activities.

Resolved: *that the report be received.*

171. NE Regional Event "Your Region Your Community" 9th March 2016

The Parish Clerk reported that details of this event had already been provided to members.

Resolved: *That Councillors Mrs. J. Unsworth & Mrs. P. English be authorised to attend.*

172. S.L.C.C. Practitioner Conference Booking

The Parish Clerk tabled a report detailing the reasons why an additional place was required at the conference and the action taken.

Resolved: *That the action taken by the Parish Clerk endorsed.*

173. Delegates Report on attendance at S.L.C.C. Practitioners Conference

Councillor Mrs. Unsworth outlined the reasons for attending and the networking opportunities provided. She also gave a verbal report on the topics discussed and the knowledge gained.

Resolved: *That the report be received.*

174. Members Expenses – Request for Additional Payment

A request from Councillor Williams that the Parish Council cover the cost of his additional overnight's accommodation whilst attending the recent S.L.C.C. Practitioners Conference was considered.

Referring to the report tabled earlier in the meeting,¹ by the Parish Clerk, members expressed deep concern that despite efforts made to comply with Councillor Williams request that he be authorised to attend the conference and that the additional accommodation he had personally requested be booked on his behalf, he had failed to turn up. Furthermore he had not offered any explanation for not doing so. This had resulted in unnecessary expenditure of £401.20 of Council Tax funding.

Resolved: That:-

- a) *The request be refused and that Councillor Williams be required to reimburse the Parish Council the sum of £128.00 for the additional overnight accommodation booked at his request,*
- b) *That until Councillor Williams provides an acceptable explanation for not attending repayment of travel expenses incurred by him be withheld,*
- c) *That Councillor Williams be requested to reimburse the Parish Council a further £401.20 in lost conference fees providing provision existed under existing Council policies.*

This was the unanimous decision of Council Members in attendance.

175. NE Community Led Development Network Workshop 20th April 2016

The Parish Clerk reported that initial details of the event which was to take place in Stocksfield Community Centre, Northumberland, had already been provided to members.

Resolved: That Councillor Unsworth be authorised to attend.

176. Resignation of Councillor

Members were advised that Councillor John Luke had tendered his resignation.

The Monitoring Officer had been advised and arrangements were being made to call an election or fill the position by means of co-option.

Resolved: That the information be noted

177. 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.

¹ ***Minute 169 refers.***

178. Depot Storage facility

The Parish Clerk reported that following a further meeting,² D.C.C. had proposed that a 12 month lease on the land with a possible 12 month extension commencing on 1st April, 2016 until 31st March, 2017 be entered into. Members raised concern that if the Parish Council could not complete its negotiations to outsource its grounds maintenance operation and/or construct an alternative storage facility elsewhere in the village within 12 months it would be left in an untenable position.

It was suggested that if the lease included an appropriately worded clause(s) that allowed the Parish Council to occupy the site for a 12 months **and** the additional 12 months, if the Parish Council so determined a lease could be accepted.

Resolved: *That the proposal be rejected and D.C.C. be asked to consider revising the terms of the lease.*

179. Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments

A notification on the appointment of auditors was considered.

Resolved: *That the Parish Council remain "opted in" under Group 2 of the SAAA arrangements and continue to receive an audit from the appointed auditors.*

180. Hazardous Parking

It was pointed out that some visitors attending functions and events held in the Methodist Chapple, Dunelm Road were failing to park in the designated car park resulting in a potential dangerous situation being created on the highway.

Resolved: *That the concerns for the Parish Council be brought to the attention of P.C. Hall and the Vicar of the Methodist Chapel.*

Meeting terminated 8:01pm

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held in Thornley Village Centre, High Street, Thornley on 3rd May 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

² *Extra ordinary meeting of the Council held on 2nd February 2016 minute 157 refers*