

**MINUTES OF  
THORNLEY PARISH COUNCIL  
THORNLEY VILLAGE CENTRE  
7TH JULY 2020**

**PRESENT**

**Councillors Mrs. J. Unsworth (Chairperson), Mrs. P. English, Ms. J. Grant, Mrs. A. Kelly, M. McCoy, Mrs. P. Maddison, David Smith, Davy Smith, T. Unsworth.**

**APOLOGIES**

- None

**PUBLIC**

- Several members of the public were present. & social distancing and contact tracing measures were in place.

**Meeting Commenced 7:00pm**

**14. Draft Minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3rd March 2020 were tabled, approved and signed by the Chairperson as an accurate record.

**15. Draft minutes of the Personnel Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2020 were tabled, approved and signed by the Chairperson as an accurate record.

**16. Public Question and Answer Session**

Several members of the public expressed concern that Planning Permission was being sought to extend the opening hours of a retail outlet in the village and that the Parish Council considers opposing this application.

***Resolved: That the Parish Council supports residents and advises Durham County Council that it objects to the revised opening hours proposed by the applicant.***

**17. Police Report**

A report provided by CPSO Sarah Kinghorn was tabled for discussion.

***Resolved: That the report be received.***

**18. County Councillor Report**

Councillor Grant reported that the business being conducted by the County Council was limited because of the Coronavirus Pandemic lockdown. She did however provide a verbal report on the issues relating to Thornley.

***Resolved: That the report be received.***

**19. Chairperson's Statement**

Councillor Mrs. Unsworth reiterated the importance for members to respond when requested to emails from the Parish Clerk in order that their views could be noted on particular issues.

***Resolved: That the information be noted.***

**20. Matters Arising - Progress Report of the Parish Clerk & Councillors**

The Parish Clerk provided an update on the following:-

- Staff Restructure – Underway

- Parish Councillor Vacancy – Advertised in accordance with procedure. Co-option would be considered if necessary.
- Stabilisation of Welfare Park Fence – Works delayed now commencing 27th July 2020

**21. Internal Audit 2019/20**

The report of the internal Audit was considered.

***Resolved: That the report be received.***

**22. Recognition of Councillor Wilson's Long Service**

The Chair reminded members that prior to his resignation Councillor George Wilson had served the community for 60 years.

***Resolved: That to recognise Councillor Wilson's dedicated service a suitable tree be planted and a plaque be erected.***

**23. Welfare Park Hire Fees**

Members considered the disruption to match fixtures of teams using the Welfare Park as their home ground due to Coronavirus Pandemic

***Resolved: That the hire fees for the 2020/21 season be waived.***

**24. Car Parking - Welfare Park**

The Chair highlighted the need for additional car parking and suggested that the former Thornley Community Centre site would be ideal for this purpose.

***Resolved: Durham County Council be approached to discuss the possibility of leasing the site.***

**25. Youll House – Refurbishment/Lease Hire**

The Parish Clerk reported that in order to lease the building to a prospective client as opposed to demolition or sale, refurbishment would be necessary to make it fit for purpose.

Resolved: That comparative costs be provided for consideration.

**26. Christmas Lights on Trees Village Green**

The Chair suggested that permission be sought from Durham County Council to install Christmas lights on trees on the Village Green opposite the Village Centre.

***Resolved: That D.C.C. be obtained if possible.***

**27. Planning Matters**

Planning Applications submitted to Durham County Council were considered.

***Resolved: That no objections be raised.***

**28. Training & Development**

The Parish Clerk reported that Councillor David Smith provided a brief report on a recent training course he had attended.

***Resolved: That the report be received***

**29. Report of the Facilities & Community Officer**

The Facilities & Community Officers report<sup>2</sup> was tabled for discussion.

***Resolved: That the report be received.***

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<sup>2</sup> Previously circulated

**30. 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 information be noted.***

**31. 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.

**32. War Memorial Insurance**

Consideration was given to increasing the level of insurance necessary to cover repair or replacement of the Thornley War Memorial in the event that it was targeted or damaged by protesters in the light of events taking place throughout the country relating to the Black Lives Matter movement.

***Resolved: That no action be taken***

**33. Risk Assessments**

The Chair highlighted the need for undertaking additional risk assessments relating to the Council's premises in view of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

***Resolved: That appropriate risk assessments be undertaken.***

**34. Playground Re-opening**

The Chair reported on the latest information from Government in relation to the reopening of Children's playgrounds.

***Resolved: That the Children's playgrounds remain closed and that the situation be reviewed in a month's time.***

**35. B1279 Roadside Hedge**

Councillor McCoy reported that the overgrown hedge was causing some difficulty for motorists and pedestrian and asked if arrangements could be made to have it cut back before an accident occurred.

The Parish Clerk explained that the hedge maintenance was the responsibility of the landowning farmer and therefore the Parish Council could not intervene directly. He had however received similar reports from residents and had passed the concerns to the D.C.C. Highway department to see if they could contact the farmer to resolve matters.

***Resolved: That the information be noted.***

**36. Parish Councillor Vacancy**

Durham County Council advised that no applications had been received to fill the vacancy following the resignation of George Wilson and therefore the Parish Council could make arrangements to fill the vacancy by co-option.

***Resolved: That the Parish Clerk advertises the position.***

**37. Allotment Issues**

The Parish Clerk reported that on a recent inspection of allotments it was noted that a number of tenants were failing to maintain their allotments in line with tenancy agreements.

***Resolved: That procedures appropriate measures be taken.***

**38. Hedge on B1283**

Councillor McCoy highlighted the danger posed to pedestrians and motorists because of the overgrown hedge.

***Resolved: That this matter be brought to the attention of D.C.C. Highways Department.***

***Meeting Terminated: 8:30pm***