

## THORNDON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

### Minutes of Meeting held at Thorndon Village Hall on 2 January 2014

**Present:** Cllr Bartlett, Cllr Botwright, Cllr Cattermole, Cllr Le Gros (Vice Chairman), Cllr Hayward, Cllr Ravenhill (Chairman) and Cllr Taylor

**Also present:** Mrs A Thompson (Clerk), Mr A Stringer, Mr R Jenkins, Mr M Sillett and Mrs C Aldous

#### Meeting Opened 20.00

#### 1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest:

**Apologies for absence:** Cllr Theobald

**Declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests:** None

#### 2. Open Meeting to Public – 20.02

The Chairman asked members of the public to detail which particular agenda item, if any, they had an interest in.

#### Meeting closed to Public – 20.04

#### 3. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of Thorndon Parish Council held on 5 December 2013

The minutes from the meeting held on 5 December 2013 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman

#### 4. Action Points/matters arising from those minutes

Summary of Action Points from Last Meeting		
<b>04.07.13 - 02</b>	Review and cost options for enforcement of speed limit in The Street	JH & PT c/fwd
<b>05.09.13 - 03</b>	Establish whether a bus shelter is available for the Play Area	JLG c/fwd to March 2014
<b>03.10.13 - 01</b>	Speak to Kerrison Trust following discussion with Messrs Beech and Bush	MR/PB c/fwd to February 2014
<b>03.10.13 - 02</b>	Contact Highways Department re faded signs around Village	PB c/fwd
<b>07.11.13 - 04</b>	Contact owner of the chicken sheds in the vicinity of Thwaite Road	Complete
<b>05.12.13 - 01</b>	Investigate activity on land next to Pit Hills	Complete
<b>05.12.13 - 02</b>	Speak to the Police concerning the continued problem of parking between the Church and School during the school day	Complete
<b>05.12.13 - 03</b>	Arrange for Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau to attend a forthcoming Parish Council meeting to give a presentation of the services it offers	Complete

**04.07.13 – 02** Cllr Hayward has written to the Police Commissioner who forwarded Cllr Hayward's letter onto M Mottram who in turn referred the same to D Stiff. D Stiff has now passed the letter on to the relevant department for consideration. Cllr Stringer advised that he knows D Stiff and will liaise with him on this issue at their monthly meetings.

**03.10.13 – 02** Cllr Bartlett now has a list of affected signs which he will refer to the Highways Department at Suffolk County Council.

**07.11.13 – 04** The Clerk wrote to 2 Agriculture Limited, and has received a response from the HS&E Regional Manager who explained that the unusually obnoxious odour pervading Thwaite Road last November had been identified as an operational issue which was addressed swiftly. There should be no recurrence of the odour. The letter further confirmed that the farm is covered by an EPR/IPPC permit and as such is required to work under these regulations which it has successfully done for many years to the point it has been able to join the Environment Agency Farm Assurance Scheme for low risk farms.

**05.12.13 – 01** Cllr Le Gros has pursued the concerns expressed about activity at Pit Hills and confirmed that there was no obvious activity.

**05.12.13 – 02** Cllr Ravenhill has been in contact with the Headmistress at Thorndon School who confirmed that the school is as concerned with this issue and has contacted the Police for guidance as to measures it can take. The school has received the same advice as the Parish Council, namely that there is no illegal activity taking place and no enforcement action can be taken. This raised the issue as to whether Thorndon Town Trust, which owns land adjoining the Church would be prepared to release some of this land for overflow parking. Cllr Ravenhill will write to the Chairman of Thorndon Town Trust to enquire as to whether this would be possible. **Action Point 02.01.14 – 01**

## **Meeting opened to Public 20.15**

### **5. Reports**

**5.1 County Councillor's Report:** Cllr Stringer was present at the meeting and delivered his report, a copy of which is attached.

**5.2 District Councillor's Report:** Cllr Tilbury was not present at the meeting but provided a report, a copy of which is attached.

**5.3 Police Report:** No representative from Police was present at the meeting nor did they provide a report although Cllr Ravenhill did pass on some detail received from the Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator.

## **Meeting closed to Public 21.26**

### **6. Planning**

**6.1 Planning Applications:** None

**6.2 Listed Planning Applications:** None

**6.3 Approvals:** Application 2995.13 for the erection of three two storey detached dwellings with garages, shared access and turning at Moat Farm, High Street, Thorndon has been approved.

**6.4 Refusals:** None

**6.5 Listed Building Consent:** None

**6.6 Other:** None

### **7. Clerks Report**

**7.1 Financial Update:** The current balance is £14,364.93.

## 7.2 Payments to be made:

Date Rcvd	Payee	Purchase/Service	Amount (£)	VAT/IPT	Total (£)	Agreed/ Declined	Chq No. (& ref)
02.01.14	HMRC	PAYE	72.00		72.00	Agreed	100571 (13/14 - 30)
02.01.14	Mrs A J Thompson	Salary Month 9	207.12		207.12	Agreed	100572 (13/14 - 31)
02.01.14	HMRC	PAYE	51.78		51.78	Agreed	100573 (13/14 - 32)
02.01.14	Mr C Cattermole	Refund for Dog Bin materials	9.82		9.82	Agreed	100574 (13/14 - 33)
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£340.72</b>		<b>£340.72</b>		

**7.3** Following the approval of Planning Application 2995.13 (see 6.3 above), the Parish Council is to seek the repayment of all monies expended in clearing Street Farm ditch in 2006. **Action Point 02.01.14 - 02**

**7.4** The setting of the precept for the financial year 2014 – 2015 was discussed. This year, in particular, sees certain changes in Government policy and grant reductions, all of which have an impact on Parish Councils. The Clerk, and Responsible Financial Officer, set out the position as follows:

**7.4.1** In the current financial year (taking into account anticipated expenditure to the 31.03.14) the Parish Council will spend £7,508.00 without making any donations for which £1,500.00 of the current precept of £7,750.00 was budgeted.

**7.4.2** The Parish Council needs to retain a contingency at all times in case an election is called. This is (currently) £1,500.00.

**7.4.3** Following changes introduced last year by Central Government to the means by which Council Tax benefit is now administered, there has been a reduction in the monies actually received by Mid Suffolk District Council. This was covered by way of a grant from Central Government last year, but this year they have stated that this grant will be phased out over the next 4 years with a 25% reduction for each of the following 4 years. Over and above this the Clerk has received a letter from Mid Suffolk District Council advising that the grant to Thorndon, which was £604.00 for the current financial year, has now been adjusted to £266.00 instead of the expected £453.00. There is no clear explanation as to how this calculation has been made, but the result is that the Parish Council cannot rely on receipt of this grant, and must look at the precept in the light of this.

**7.4.4** Cllrs Ravenhill and Hayward attended a Parish Liaison meeting at Mid Suffolk District Council in November from which it was apparent that there will be an increasing obligation imposed on Parish Councils as Local Authorities look to save money themselves. Given that the Parish Council is currently 'standing still' with the precept at its current level, it must consider the potential financial impact of any responsibilities passed down from Mid Suffolk District Council. One small example is the increase in the annual cost to the Parish Council for the emptying of dog bins. This cost is rising next year from £20.00 per bin to £25.00 per bin (a 25% increase). Mid Suffolk District Council still heavily subsidises this service, which subsidy could well be withdrawn.

**7.4.5** Another factor to take into account is the possibility that Parish Council precepts will be capped. To date, Parish Councils have avoided capping, but at a workshop attended by the Clerk at Mid Suffolk District Council the feeling is that it is only a matter of time before a 2% cap is imposed on Parish Councils, and there was some talk that the cap would be

introduced for the 2014-2015 financial year. This now looks not to be the case, but the Parish Council must consider the limiting effect capping would have on the precept and necessarily monies available to it to finance projects in the Village.

**7.4.6** Finally, there is the Play Area. Whilst the Parish Council procured Lottery Funding for the creation of the Play Area, there is now only £1,935.78 left in the Play Area account with an invoice of circa £500.00 awaited. This year the Parish Council has spent £1,000.00 on the Play Area and must factor such expenditure into the precept going forward.

In the light of all these factors the Parish Council recognised the necessity for a significant increase in the precept this year. There was one proposal of £12,000.00 and a counter proposal of £10,000.00. The counter proposal secured 2 votes in favour, and the proposal at £12,000.00 secured 5 votes in favour with 2 abstentions.

**7.5** Mr Robert Jenkins was co-opted onto the Parish Council.

## **8. AOB and Meeting opened to the Public 21.30**

**8.1** The triangle on Thwaite Road is being used by Simonds buses (route 114) to turn around notwithstanding this is not on the bus route. This activity is causing damage and it was agreed the the Clerk would write to the bus company requesting they pay for the damage to be made good. **Action point 02.01.14 - 03**

## **Meeting closed to the Public 21.34**

**9. Next meeting date was confirmed as Thursday 6 February, 2014 at 8.00pm.**

## **MEETING CLOSED 21.35**

<b>Summary of Action Points for Next Meeting</b>		
<b>04.07.13 - 02</b>	Review and cost options for enforcement of speed limit in The Street	JH & PT c/fwd
<b>05.09.13 - 03</b>	Establish whether a bus shelter is available for the Play Area	JLG c/fwd to March 2014
<b>03.10.13 - 01</b>	Speak to Kerrison Trust following discussion with Messrs Beech and Bush	MR/PB c/fwd to February 2014
<b>03.10.13 - 02</b>	Contact Highways Department re faded signs around Village	PB c/fwd
<b>02.01.14 - 01</b>	Write to the Chairman of Thorndon Town Trust to enquire whether they can make some land available for overflow parking adjacent to the Church	MR
<b>02.01.14 - 02</b>	Request repayment of monies expended by the Parish Council in clearing Street Farm ditch in 2006	AT
<b>02.01.14 - 03</b>	Write to Simonds Bus Company concerning the damage to the triange on Thwaite Road	AT