THORNDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held in the Church
on 7th April, 2022 starting at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Robert Jenkins, Cllr Emma Milton, Cllr Marion Ravenhill, Cllr Peter Taylor, Cllr Jill Wilson

In attendance: Odile Wladon (Locum Clerk), Cllr Andrew Stringer (District & County), Claude Brand (Neighbourhood Watch) and 4 members of the public

Item Ref	Description
22.04.01	**Chairman's welcome**
22.04.02	**Apologies for Absence** (a) Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Peter Bridge, Tim Cherrett and James Hayward. (b) Councillors **voted** to accept the apologies.
22.04.03	**Declarations of Interests – in subsequent agenda items** (a) There were no Councillor Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests. (b) There were no Councillor Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.
22.04.04	**Dispensations:** none were requested
22.04.05	**Councillor vacancy:** there were no applications for co-option to review.
22.04.06	**Minutes:** Councillors reviewed and **approved** the minutes as a true record of the business conducted at the meeting held on 3rd March 2022.
22.04.07	**Reports:** (a) County Councillor – appended to the minutes (b) District Councillor – appended to the minutes (c) Questions raised at meeting: Cllr Taylor asked how to make contact with an officer at SCC as the report it tool does not permit full questions to be raised. Cllr Stringer recommended the matter be sent directly to him. Cllr Jenkins asked whether it is possible for MSDC to insist on solar panels on new dwellings. Cllr Stringer advised that this proposal was not brought forward by Central Government therefore it was not possible for the District Council to instigate.
22.04.08	**Public forum:** The question of lorries travelling through the village was raised, in particular the HGVs in regards to the development at Castle Hill. It was noted that there was an agenda item regarding the purchase of 6 lorry watch signs to move that forward. Cllr Stringer contacted the land owner and asked them to check the vehicles were advised not to travel though the village. It was noted that individuals can report HGVs directly to trading standards.
22.04.09	**Planning:** Councillors **agreed** the following responses to planning consultations: **DC/21/06871** – application for reserved matters following grant of outline planning

Item Ref	Description
	permission DC/19/01310 dated: 11/12/2019 – appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for erection of 20no. dwellings and access (following demolition of existing buildings). Land adjoining The Principals House, Stoke Road, IP23 7JG **Reason for reconsultation**: Drawings dated 10th March 2022 Councillors did not wish to add any further comments to those previously submitted, and still expect the site to comply with the policies laid out in the made Neighbourhood Plan. **DC/22/01784** – erection of front porch extension. The Harriots, High Street, IP23 7LX Councillors voted to support this application as there were no issues with the plans submitted.
22.04.10	**Finance:** Cllrs **approved** the payments including: (a) Payment on account for works to railings: Under One Roof £5,000.00 (b) Payments for staff related expenditure: various £1,365.00 (c) Payment to cover annual subscription: SALC £347.30
22.04.11	**Playing field:** Cllr Ravenhill updated the meeting as follows: • Most of the trees for the Queen's Green Canopy have been planted. • Pupils from the primary school were involved in the planting as where members of the local mother and toddler group. • The tree planting is the first phase, it has been suggested that flowers such as blue bells, snowdrops and daffodils should also be planted. • A low fence around the planted area should be investigated as this would give protection to the trees as they grow. • About 1/3 of the field is still accessible for the public to use, and the area at the bottom has been left clear to enable access for cutting down willow in the adjacent area. • The tables at the picnic area at the top end of the field need attention or replacing. • Volunteers will be needed to look after the area moving forward, it is possible a water butt will be needed. • The location of the current bin will need to be reviewed when the fence is updated.
22.04.12	**Clerk's report** (a) Cllrs noted the following correspondence received by the Clerk: • Community Action Suffolk – annual renewal, Cllrs decided not to progress this year. • Festival of Suffolk – Mr Clinton Cattermole's nomination for the Torch Relay has been acknowledged. • Mid Suffolk District Council – Community Governance Review, information received concerning a consultation, this will be added to the May Council meeting agenda. • Correspondence from a family in the village raising concerns about the level of tree planting on the playing field, in particular about the lack of open space for children to have a kick about or families to picnic. Cllrs noted that due to the slope this was not the best place for a kick about – the Clerk will contact the Kerrison Trust to ascertain whether the playing field their could still be used. Cllrs noted that a review of picnic tables was suggested earlier in the meeting (item 22.04.11) (b) Cllrs noted that the Clerk has contact Suffolk County Council regarding the ownership of

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	land in front of the Church grounds.
22.04.13	**Training :** No training has been undertaken
22.04.14	**Bus shelter:** Cllrs **agreed** to remove this from the agenda at the present time.
22.04.15	**Quiet Lanes:** Cllrs noted that some areas within Suffolk have had their signage installed, there has been no update received for Thorndon.
22.04.16	**Highways** (a) Report on highway signs in the Parish – there was no update on costings. (b) Councillors **approved** the purchase of 6 “Lorry Watch” signs for to be installed on signs at the entrances to the village. (c) SCC Lorry Route – Cllrs noted the proposed 18 month ban on HGVs in residential areas in Eye. This has been brought in to evaluate the impact on other areas should a permanent ban be introduced through a TRO.
22.04.17	**Neighbourhood Watch report**: • 1 x new neighbour has been welcomed to the village and has joined the mailing list. Mr Brand was pleased to report that the member of the public thanked everyone in the village for their warm welcome. • A locality meeting of the Safer Neighbourhood Team took place on 14th March, it was poorly attended – the Police noted that they are receiving an increasing number of complaints about speeding and an increase in vehicle movements linked to the poultry industry. It was also noted that the Cranswick factory is proposing a 3 fold increase in its production. It was also noted that there have been thefts of heating oil and agricultural fertiliser. • Notification has been received of traffic restriction between 26 and 28th April on Thwaite Road. • Mr Brand passed on a letter with an enquiry into a local Ukraine Scheme – the Clerk will investigate.
22.04.18	**Meeting opened to the public for brief matters of report –** there were not matters raised.
22.04.19	**Date of next meeting**: 5th May 2022 which will be the Annual Meeting of the Council

Meeting closed at: 8.40pm

Signed: ___________________________ Date:

District Council report:

Budget & Buses	On the 24th of February the District Council agreed the budget for 2022/2023, this budget agreed a zero% increase in council tax for the district portion of the Bill, this was entirely predictable as the council had not managed to spend almost 1/3 of its circa £9,000,000.00 budget last year and in fact has had significant underspends for the last 8 years. Our Group submitted an amendment to the budget which the conservative administration agreed to take forward, the amendment agreed that the district council will fund two electric minibuses to help tackle the shortfall in bus provision witnessed over the last decade or so. These Buses are highly likely to be operated by existing Community Bus operators. And will help reconnect some communities that have had services drastically reduced in recent years.
Peer Review (s)	Back in November, The District Council had a Peer review into our planning service, a number of parishes and members of the public have expressed concerns regarding the experience of the current system being, challenging and at times a waste of their time, this situation needs to be improved. The review investigated how we might improve our practises, The report has now been published and the findings will be implemented, and recommended changes will now be worked on, to improve our service. This month another Peer review has been conducted into our Communities service.
Mid Suffolk re-affirms its support for Neighbourhood Plans	Given the recent issues surrounding the Neighbourhood planning process and administration. our group proposed a motion that called on Mid Suffolk to re-affirm their support for the communities that are working on or who have made neighbourhood plans. Surprisingly most of the Conservative Councillors did not back this motion, but it was approved by the council due to the amount of administration councillors not attending. Mid Suffolk recently has had another member of staff join to help with moving these local plans forward.
Judicial Review	A judge has quashed planning consent for 210 homes in the village of Thurston following a two-day hearing at the High Court. Thurston Parish Council had lodged a judicial review against Mid Suffolk District Council's planning permission for the Bloor Homes estate off Beyton Road. The parish council alleged district council committee members were wrongly advised on the weight to be given to the Neighbourhood Plan, which did not allocate the site for development. It also believed the committee was wrongly advised on planning balance and that the decision prejudices the Local Plan process, which has not yet been completed, and indeed has stalled. The judge has ordered that the planning permission for the Bloor Homes scheme be quashed and sent back to Mid Suffolk District Council to be re-determined. This is yet another case of Neighbourhood plans being given too little weight by MSDC when assessing planning applications This should mean that Mid Suffolk take more account of Neighbourhood Plans in future, although MSDC could appeal this decision with the High Court. Although Mid Suffolk are considering taking this decision to the High Court. This would be MSDC using public money to legally argue against a community owned plan.

County Council report:

International Women's Month, and Day 2022 – #BreaktheBias

In March, we celebrated International Women's Month 2022. This is a time to acknowledge and celebrate the amazing achievements of women and push further for equality around the world. This year's theme revolved around breaking the bias, focussing on a world free of bias, stereotypes and discrimination.

Our group was immensely supportive of this celebration. Suffolk GLI's Spokesperson for Women, Cllr Caroline Page, called for the flag for Women's History Month to be flown high next year at Endeavour House. Suffolk County Council agreed this was an important step forward.

Cabinet 1st March

The Cabinet met to vote on the disapproval of the current plans by Sunnica to build the country's largest solar farm in Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire. Suffolk County Council have asked the Government to reject the plans in its current form, arguing the application fails to properly mitigate the impacts of such a large project.

In addition, the Cabinet voted on approving the National Grid's project to scale up its energy infrastructure from Bramford to Twinstead, as part of the Government's Net-Zero plan to increase low-carbon energy in the UK. Our Group, while we approve of the increased capacity for low-carbon energy, argue that this rush into large projects is a result of decades of inaction from Government. This means it is now a lot harder to develop a coordinated plan with regards to energy supply, disruption, and sufficient mitigation.

Both were voted for by the Cabinet unanimously.

Full Council 24th March

Full Council presented a rare opportunity of solidarity between Councillors, as our Group and the Conservatives shared a single motion in support of Ukraine. Our Group recommended a motion condemning the actions of the Russian government, as well as commitment to supporting and welcoming refugees as they become a part of our Suffolk communities. The Conservatives supported our idea and together we showed how politics can be put aside through difficult times.

Cabinet 29th March

The Cabinet met to vote on a plan to establish 'Freeport East'. This is part of a national strategy to create freeports across the country, in an attempt to generate economic activity through tax incentives. Felixstowe Port, Harwich Port, and Stowmarket's 'Gateway 14' Business Park are set to become part of Freeport East. Our Group is severely concerned with this project, as foreign direct investment is being prioritised over local businesses, many of which will find it difficult to compete with the overseas businesses receiving Business Rates, VAT and National Insurance Tax relief. The project poses many other challenges, such as potential increase in money laundering etc, a lack of clear strategy towards net-zero, and a risk of high-skilled jobs being imported, excluding the Suffolk workforce.

The Cabinet also voted on the Enhanced Partnership between SCC and bus operators, in line with the new Bus Back Better strategy, aimed at improving services across Suffolk. The improvement plan was voted for in October 2021, and this partnership outlines how the various stakeholders will interact with one another during the implementation of the improvement plan. Our Group have concerns on the Government's promise of funding, as the pot was cut in half in an announcement last month, This week it has been confirmed by the Department for Transport that Suffolk will not get any funding from this initiative, while Norfolk will get circa £49,000,000.00 .