

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES MEETING held on Wednesday 18th December 2024 commencing at 7.00pm in Thurston Community Library, Norton Road, Thurston.

Present: Cllrs. Dashper (in the Chair), Allen, Balham, Bond, Gerrish, Marsh, Morris, Rainbow and West.

Also in attendance: Mrs Waples, Parish Clerk and Mrs Gladwell, Deputy Parish Clerk. There were no members of the public in attendance.

1. **OPENING** – the Chair opened the meeting advising all that the Protocol adopted by the Parish Council for reporting at Parish Council Meetings, would be enacted for this meeting. A copy of the Protocol is available from the Clerk or can be downloaded from the website: <https://thurstonparishcouncil.uk/parish-council/policies-procedures-and-strategy/>.
2. **APOLOGIES** –
 - a) Council to receive apologies for absence – Verified apologies were received from Cllrs. Moy and Smith. Cllr. Millest was noted as absent.
 - b) Council to consent to accept apologies received – The submitted apologies were accepted and approved, aif.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COUNCILLORS INCLUDING GIFTS OF HOSPITALITY EXCEEDING £50** –
 - a) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests; other registerable and non-registerable interests as detailed in Appendix B of the LGA Model Code of Conduct – there were no interests declared for the meeting.
 - b) To receive notification of gifts or hospitality exceeding £50 – there were none submitted.
 - c) To note the determination of requests for dispensations in accordance with Council's Dispensation Policy – there were none to be reported.
4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS** : (*all as previously circulated*) to receive and consider minutes:
 - a) Committees Meeting of 20th November 2024 – **it was resolved to approve the minutes as previously circulated and to give consent for the Chair to sign the approved minutes as true and accurate record of the proceedings that took place, in accordance with legislation, aif.**
5. **PUBLIC FORUM** –
 - a) To receive comments from members of the public in attendance on the agenda submitted – there were no members in attendance.
 - b) To receive comments from members of the public on matters relating to Thurston – no comments had been submitted.
6. **STATUTORY BUSINESS:**
 - a) Land adjacent to 54 Barleyfields, Thurston
 - i. Council to consider whether it is interested in acquiring this land from Sustrans (as indicated in red on the map entitled "Land at Barleyfields") at a cost of £1 conditional on the land being used as amenity land to benefit the adjacent footpath – it was noted that ownership could address the issues associated with an unkempt area. All noted that further work would be required to bring the area into use as an improved amenity. **The meeting resolved to accept the cost of £1 for the purchase of the land to be used as amenity land to benefit the adjacent footpath.**
 - ii. Council to agree to contribute £500 plus VAT to Sustrans' legal fees on this basis – **it was resolved to agree to contribute £500 plus VAT to Sustrans' legal fees on this basis.**
7. **TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO PLANNING:**
 - a) Planning Applications to be considered by the Council received from Mid Suffolk District Council-
 - i. DC/23/02429 - Hybrid Planning Application – Full Planning application: Erection of 3no. dwellings with garaging and open space provision on adjacent site Outline Planning application (Access Points to be considered, Appearance, Layout, Landscaping and Scale to be Reserved) Erection of 7 No. Dwellings with associated garaging involving the demolition of an existing building and the provision of allotments and

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community land with its own independent access and car parking on adjacent land. The hybrid application includes a package of mitigation offered by the developer. PLEASE NOTE THIS APPLICATION HAS BEEN REVISED AND NOW INCLUDES THE PROPOSAL PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED UNDER APPLICATION REFERENCE DC/23/02430 (BARRELLS ROAD). Location: Land at Norton Road and land at Barrells Road – council to note this is brought back for further consideration in light of the Case Officer’s proposal that the associated community benefits be transferred to the District Council and not the parish council – **it was agreed that the parish council was still supportive of the project but there has to be a cast iron agreement that the parish council is the direct recipient of the land and community infrastructure to be retained as such in perpetuity by the parish council for the community of Thurston, aif.** The Clerk confirmed that she had exhausted all avenues in trying to ascertain from the Case Officer the reasoning behind why the proposal that the community benefits should be transferred to the District Council. The parish council were aware that the issue appeared to turn on comments of a small group of individuals following the influence of a very small minority of the community. **All agreed that there was a need to escalate this through the chain of command in Mid Suffolk prior to the council submitting a formal comment on the latest proposal.**

- ii. DC/24/04801 - Householder Application - Erection of a two-storey rear extension, including 2 No. front dormer windows and conservation roof light; new roof tiles and render elevations. Location: 26 Heather Close – **it was resolved to recommend the application for approval given that the proposal would have no detrimental impact on existing and neighbouring amenities, aif.**
 - iii. DC/24/05180 - Householder Application - Erection of a detached cart lodge with attached log store. Location: Maple House, Church Road - it was **resolved to recommend the application for approval given that the proposal would have no detrimental impact on existing and neighbouring amenities as long as the cart lodge remained ancillary to the host dwelling, aif.**
- b) To receive notification of planning applications determined by the LPA:
- i. DC/24/04544 - Permission for the erection of double garage. Location: 64 Barton Road
 - ii. DC/24/03142 – Permission for the erection of a detached outbuilding. Location: Elm Green Farmhouse, Norton Road.
 - iii. DC/24/04538 – Permission for the construction of single storey rear extension, alterations and infilling to front elevation including new porch, windows and doors. Location: Highmead House, Ixworth Road.
 - iv. DC/24/04860 – Permission to carry out works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order MS85/T10 - (T1) Oak – removal of all dead wood and lift canopy by 4.5 meters from ground level as the tree is heavily Low. Location: 39 Genesta Drive
 - v. DC/24/04825 – Permission for the conversion of garage to additional living accommodation forming study and garden store. Location: 30 Howes Avenue
 - vi. SCC/0094/23MS – Planning permission for the Provision of 10 drop-off points with 60 car parking spaces and cycle parking for associated use with the adjacent Thurston Community College and change of use of the land west of the proposed car park to a school playing field. (Amended to 15 drop-off points by plan dated 24.9.24). Location: Land to the north of Thurston Community College, Ixworth Road.
 - vii. DC/24/04172 - Discharge of Conditions for DC/20/01716 - Condition 21 (Landscape Open Space and Ecological Management Plan) Location: land on the north side of Norton Road
 - viii. DC/24/05183 - Non-Material Amendment relating to DC/24/00306 - Change of colours to window frames and change of plain tile to pan tile. Location: Rojulina, Hollow Lane.
- c) Adoption of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Intensive Livestock and Poultry Farming SPD – council noted the adoption of both documents supporting the implementation of planning policies contained within the adopted Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan 1 DPD.
- d) Quarterly update on Michaelmas Court, Heath Road – council to note receipt of the update in relation to Michaelmas Court. The meeting noted that the contractor RG Carter Southern Limited were at an advanced stage of the build with updates provided as follows: work in all areas of site internally and externally was progressing well. Attenuation tanks are all installed, and drainage is progressing well in all areas. RG Carter Southern Limited were currently reporting the construction to be eight weeks behind the original programme. The forecast completion date was now 22 April 2025. The contractor was confident this date will be met, and they are striving to complete the scheme earlier than that if possible. It will be

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six weeks between Practical Completion and the first residents moving in and as such the date of 2nd June 2025 was now the target date. Staff recruitment by the Operational Team has already commenced and will gather pace early next year. The Clerk was made aware that Heath Road was rather muddy from the site on both the road and the pavement leading to the bottom of Heath Road.

- e) Persimmon Homes – Hakewill Mews – council to receive commentary on
 - i. Phase 1 planting and Phase 1 Recreational Facilities Audit – the clerk provided a verbal update but overall it was agreed that the response from Persimmon Homes blaming residents and surrounding people for damage to play areas, their lack of understanding as to landscaping conditions and for littering was poor and did not engender good community relations. It was agreed that the council would continue to place pressure for the outstanding issues to be addressed, irrespective as to who had overall responsibility of the public open space. It was noted that some of these issues were the responsibility of the management company following hand over of the site to the Management Company RMG on 1st December 2024. Issues to be addressed by RMG covered: broken barriers to the open space areas; lowering of noticeboard; repairs to fencing at children’s playground; further work to gym equipment ground surface and repairs to lifting rubber matting. It was further stated by Persimmon that they did not plant litter and would not be installing litter bins.
 - ii. Phase 2 – to receive commentary from the Head of Planning along with a request to meet in January 2025 – the clerk confirmed that she had received communication from the Head of Planning at Persimmon in relation to a request for a meeting to discuss pre-commencement conditions prior to the start on site of Phase 2 (Hakewill Mews) and that an agreed date of 22nd January 2025 was now set in the diary. Confirmation was also given as to the reasoning behind the naming of the site and the historic connection with Henry Hakewill who was a Suffolk architect who designed Stowlangtoft Hall in Suffolk and a hospital at Bury St Edmunds. He retired to Playford, Suffolk in 1867, but continued to design churches nearby, at Stonham Aspal and Grundisburgh. He was also responsible for Wickham Market Manor. Finally it was confirmed that the sign at the front of the site had been erected under deemed consent under Class 3(C) of the advertisement regulations which permits firms or individuals who are carrying out building, engineering or construction work to advertise the fact at the site.
- f) DC/24/04451 - New Housing Site (bounded to the north by Thurston Rugby Club, and to the east and west by the new Vistry and Persimmon housing developments) – drainage / flooding issues – council to receive commentary on this matter – the meeting was made aware of concerns raised with regards to water discharge at the above site. SCC Flood and Water Engineers had confirmed that the proposed development is allowed to discharge clean surface water into the watercourse at an agreed rate for all rainfall events up to and including the 1:100+40% climate change. This design was in accordance with national and local policy/guidance. It was further confirmed that the developer would have had to provide evidence to the LPA that they have the right to discharge or have acquired the right to discharge into the watercourse and that the discharge rate would be equal to around Qbar or 2l/s/ha whichever was the greater. It was confirmed that the site would be limited to Qbar aka 18l/s which was less than would run off the field.
- g) Bloor Homes – s278 works – following the clerk’s attendance at a SCC Highways meeting earlier that day, the following details on s278 works relating to the site south of Beyton Road (Bloor Homes) was received by the council: Northern access off Beyton Road – entrance and associated works will be carried out under road closures and two-way lights over a period of 10 weeks commencing 6th January 2025; Pokeriage Corner - junction works (to include drainage works) will be carried out under 4 way road closure for 7 weeks commencing 17th March 2025; Barton Road – mini roundabouts works to be carried out under part road closure and two-way traffic control for 10-12 weeks with expected commencement date to be May / June 2025.

8. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO NETWORK RAIL:

- a) To receive an update on the feasibility study relating to the Thurston Station Level Crossing as submitted by the Professional Lead – Key Site and Infrastructure (BMSDC) – it was confirmed that all were still waiting on the release of the feasibility study. Following a request by Cllr. Bradbury in relation to the footfall of stations in the Anglia region with barrow crossings and reported incidents, the following information (as received from Network Rail) relating to the latest annual passenger footfall figures had been shared: Haddiscoe Station (12,064 passengers); Halesworth Station (107,644 passengers); Kirby Cross Station (58,260 passengers);

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Marks Tey Station (452,940 passengers); Mistley Station (54,074 passengers); Salhouse Station (13,556 passengers); Somerleyton Station (10,076 passengers); Thurston Station (114,330 passengers) and Wrabness Station (23,178 passengers). These included station barrow crossings and station private access crossings. Of these nine crossings, three, including Thurston, are fitted with warning lights which are activated to warn the users of approaching trains. In relation to incidents, over the past five years (between 2019 and 2024), a total of 115 incidents were reported at these nine crossings. Two crossings, Marks Tey and Wrabness, had no incidents reported. Other stations saw, over five years: Haddiscoe: 4 incidents; Halesworth: 85 incidents Kirby Cross: 2 incidents; Mistley: 4 incidents; Salhouse: 2 incidents; Somerleyton: 4 incidents and Thurston: 14 incidents. The vast majority of incidents were classified as 'level crossing misuse,' which included people crossing in front of stationary trains or in front of moving trains despite being able to see them approaching. Only a minority of these incidents were declared to be 'near misses.' Most of them instead involved members of the public putting themselves at greater risk than necessary by ignoring instructions and signage, but not putting themselves in significant immediate danger.

It was also confirmed that Network Rail were supportive of the aspirations to close the crossing and recognised that doing so would allow passengers to cross the line more safely whilst improving the accessibility of the station, they wished it to be clarified that the crossing hasn't been identified as needing to be closed as part of a wider programme such as the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement scheme.

9. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO THURSTON:

- a) To note Mid Suffolk District Council's approval of CIL Bid M23-29 for £188,548.81 – the meeting noted that the bid had been approved by MDC with funding streams as follows: £94,274.41 from the Strategic Infrastructure Fund and a total of £94,274.40 split between the Ringfenced Infrastructure Funds for Walsham-le-Willows, Badwell Ash, Thurston, Elmswell and Woolpit subject to the grant of planning permission which is expected to be before the 10th December 2024 (see SCC/0094/23MS Decision above).
- b) To note the delegated decision for CIL Bid M24-20 as reported – approval of the bid for £6,000.00 (100% CIL funding) to Network Rail for rail improvements, next phase of level Crossing Project – the meeting noted that the bid had been approved, under Officer delegation powers to allow the project to move to the next stage - pre-ESC 3 phase costs.
- c) To note the funds collected and allocated to Infrastructure projects since 2018 – the meeting noted the breakdown of funds that had been collected by the District in relation to Thurston: total collected £8,542,590.30 (CIL Admin £427,129.49; Neighbourhood CIL £963,948.25; MSDC Strategic CIL £7,151,512.26); total spent £2,853,932.93 (Neighbourhood CIL £533,372.93; MSDC Strategic CIL £2,320,560.00); total allocated £272,992.87 (Neighbourhood CIL £266,992.87; MSDC Strategic CIL £6,000.00) and total available £4,988,535.01 (Neighbourhood CIL £163,582.45; MSDC Strategic CIL £4,824,952.56).

10. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENT:

- a) To receive and consider matters relating to the monthly risk assessment reports for Heath Road, Thedwastre Park, New Green and The Recreation Ground play areas – it was noted that generally all issues reported were of a low-risk nature and would be dealt with by officers.
Heath Road – most items identified within the risk assessment report were of low risk.
New Green and Thedwastre Park – a verbal update was given which confirmed that there were no issues to note. A bench in the Wildlife Area on New Green was also loose in its foundations and would be addressed..
Recreation Ground – a verbal update was given confirming that there were no major issues to report. A new bin was on order to replace the bin on the recreation ground.
- b) To consider the design, commissioning and funding of an information board for the Wildlife Garden Project – information lectern / interpretation board – the meeting noted the funding sources for the lectern: £400 Pride in your Place grant; balance of CIL bid £38; balance to be funded (NCIL, County / District Locality Budget). It was agreed that durability of the board should be a key factor, and all were keen to ensure that there was an ongoing legacy associated with works to the garden. Recycled plastic was the preferred choice with a permanent printed design. Discussion followed over the brief which should include a summary of the reasoning behind the wildlife garden; aim of the garden and the flora and fauna that might be found there. The Deputy Clerk agreed to liaise with MSDC over the sourcing of further seeds for the area and the District Cllrs. for further funding.

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- c) To receive commentary on the 1st and 2nd meetings of the Biodiversity Action Plan Working Group – it was confirmed that the group was working its way through the audit and initiating an action plan for future consideration. The aim was to review current sites and objectives within the village to ensure that the plan was a workable document. Recommendations from the audit will be fed into the plan with short- and long-term goals to allow the parish council to realise its duty under the Biodiversity Regulations. Challenges have involved balancing biodiversity with open space use. A further meeting was planned in the new year.
- d) Council to receive commentary on potential PROW s106 Schemes for Thurston – an update on the new PRoW linking Heath Road and Barton Road was provided which stated that SCC Rights of Way and Access Team hoped to have a draft agreement completed before the end of the year which would then be sent to the landowners to approve. Once this had been completed, the final agreement could then be signed and sealed. The works to make the route usable would take place before the route will be open to the public. It was also confirmed that the surfacing works to FP7 will not take place until late January as there was concern about the proximity of the game bird pens. It was confirmed that the landowner was supportive of the scheme as soon as the ground conditions will allow.
- e) Drainage improvements along Thurston Road and The Green, Beyton – council noted that drainage improvements works had been conducted by SCC from Beyton Green to the A14 bridge (9 to 13th December). It was confirmed that SCC's teams had cleared over 30 tonnes of spoil from the ditches however, due to how wet this material is, they were unable to remove it from the location until it has dried out further. Teams will be attending the following week to check the material and remove the spoil as soon as possible. it was also noted that associated ditching works on the fields from Church Road to the flyover were also being carried out. Visually, it appeared that the water was running well from Beyton Green to the flyover. All agreed that there was a need to monitor the route in any high-water event. A further walk would be carried out through Thurston to assess the improvements and their impact.

11. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS:

- a) Council meeting – 8th January 2025 – commencing at 7.00pm in the Community Library, Norton Road.
- b) Council's Committees Meeting – 22nd January 2025 – commencing at 7.00pm in the Community Library, Norton Road.

12. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING – there being no other business the meeting was closed at 9.05pm.

Appendix A - Glossary of Common Abbreviations used

Aif	All in favour
AGAR	Annual Governance and Accountability Return
APM	Annual Parish Meeting
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
BACS	Bankers Automated Clearing Services
BUAB	Built Up Area Boundary
BMSDC	Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CC	Credit Card
CAS	Community Action Suffolk
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Chq.	Cheque
Cllr.	Councillor
CMP	Construction Management Programme
Cttee.	Committee
DC	District Council
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DD	Direct Debit
FOI	Freedom of Information
FR	Financial Regulations
GA	Greater Anglia
GPoC	General Power of Competence
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
LGBCE	Local Government Boundary Commission for England
LHB	Locality Highways Budget
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MSDC	Mid Suffolk District Council
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
NHS	National Health Service
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NR	Network Rail
PC	Parish Council
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
pdf	Portable Document Format
PIIP	Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan
PROW	Public Rights of Way
RAAC	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete
RFO	Responsible Financial Officer
SARS	Suffolk Accident Rescue Service
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SALC	Suffolk Association of Local Councils
SCC	Suffolk County Council
SID	Speed Indicator Device
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SNT	SaferNeighbourhood Team
SO	Standing Order
SPS	Suffolk Preservation Society
TCC	Thurston Community College
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
TPS	Thurston Primary School
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
VAS	Vehicle Activated Sign
VCSE	Voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations

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