

## THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the COUNCIL COMMITTEES MEETING held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 commencing at 7.00pm in Thurston Community Library, Norton Road, Thurston.

**Present:** Cllrs. Dashper (in the Chair), Balaam, Bond, Gerrish, Morris, Moy, Rainbow, Smith and West.

Also in attendance: Mrs Gladwell, Deputy Parish Clerk and Mrs Waples, Clerk (via remote means for planning matters only). There was one member of 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 - There were no applicable apologies.
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:** (*all as previously circulated*) to receive and consider minutes:
  - a) Planning Committee meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> August 2024 – **it was resolved to approve the minutes as previously circulated, aif.**
  - b) Emergency Planning Committee of 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024 – **it was resolved to approve the minutes as previously circulated, aif.**
  - c) Leisure and Environment Committee - **it was resolved to approve the minutes as previously circulated, aif. It was resolved to give consent for the Chair to sign all of the approved minutes as true and accurate records 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 comments submitted.
  - b) To receive comments from members of the public on matters relating to Thurston – there were no comments submitted.
6. **TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO PLANNING:**
  - a) To consider and formulate a response to the following matters relating to Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 2 –
    - i. Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation – the Clerk provided verbal commentary on the aspects of the consultation that should be of interest to the council: spatial strategy options (noting the five options that have been identified by the districts); mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate); the framework and site assessment criteria to be applied in site options and the relationship between the JLP Part 2 and JLP Part 1, NDPs; neighbouring authorities LDPs and Suffolk County Council Local Plans. It was generally held that the criteria and assumptions were very similar to those in existence and the proof would be in the delivery of the assumptions moving forward. In terms of sustainability, all criteria needed to be fully applied and the meeting welcomed the acknowledgement of the weighting of adopted NDPs. However, it was recognised that the process previously applied had been disjointed and implemented in a fragmented fashion. Following further discussion, **it was agreed to delegate to the Clerk a suitable response to the consultation, aif.**

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- ii. Proposed Approach to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Consultation – the Clerk spoke on the technical criteria for the site assessment to be applied for potential housing developments (five or above and residential) and potential Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites. It was noted that the consultation was for the criteria only and not the sites that had come forward as part of the Districts’ Call for Sites. Overall it was noted that whilst the methodology to be applied had been updated, there were no new areas that caused concern provided that all criteria were equally applied. All acknowledged the inadequate understanding of strategic versus the implementation of policies in terms of planning at a district level and concerns were raised at the weighting of infrastructure and how to ensure that it was brought to the fore in any new development. Concerns over the implementation and monitoring of BNG and targets for NDP areas were also raised. Following further discussion, **it was agreed to delegate to the Clerk a suitable response to the consultation, aif.**
- b) Planning Applications to be considered by the Council received from Mid Suffolk District Council –
- i. DC/23/05536 – Application for approval of Reserved Matters following Outline Planning Permission – DC/17/02782 dated 24/12/2020 – Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for Erection of 15 No. Dwellings (including 5 affordable bungalows). Location: Land off, Church Road, Access Via garden Of ‘The Firs’ – further information has been received –
  - ii. DC/24/03949 – Application for Listed Building Consent – Internal alterations, new first floor ensuite, alterations to existing attic storey ensuite. Location: Manor Farm, Pakenham Road – on the grounds that the proposal would have no detrimental impact on the listing of the building, **agreement was forthcoming for the proposal to be supported, aif.** It was agreed that the application contained a vast amount of historical information which had provided clarity on the setting of the building.
  - iii. SCC/0094/23MS – Provision of 10 drop-off points with 60 car parking spaces and cycle parking for associated use with the adjacent Thurston Community College school and change of use of the land west of the proposed car park to a school playing field at Land To the West of Ixworth Road – council to consider further in light of comments submitted to the county council and the Case Officer’s Response – following discussion with the Case Officer and the verbal proposal to increase the drop-off points by a further four/five spaces, **it was agreed to defer any comments until a revised layout plan was submitted, aif.**
  - iv. DC/24/02045 – Appeal Reference APP/W3520/W/24/3348107 – Appeal by: Mr and Mrs Last. Proposal: Application under S73 for the Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of DC/23/02342 dated 15/03/2024 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – Change of use of land to form gardens to serve Plots 2 and 3 – To Vary Condition 2 (Removal of Permitted Development Rights) as per covering letter. Location: Land Rear of Plots 2 and 3 Rooks Mede. Council to determine whether it wishes to submit further representation on this matter – **the meeting agreed that it had no further commentary on this matter, aif.**
- c) To receive notification of planning applications determined by the LPA:
- i. DC/24/03141 – planning permission for the construction of cream Hardi Plank cladding to cover the existing render on all first-floor elevations (part retention of) @ 16 Cloverfields.
  - ii. DC/24/03977 – granting of a non-material amendment relating to DC/24/02252 Reduce size of windows and retain existing position door opening @ 7 Royston Drive.
- d) To receive commentary from the Case Officer regarding Phase 2 – College Park – DC/24/02330 – the meeting was informed that the Case Officer had confirmed that Persimmon had agreed to remove the inappropriate signage advertising the new site by a specialist company at the end of August and that they had been told that it should not return unless and until they have consent to display an advertisement via a suitable application. It was confirmed that such an application would follow once the outcome of their current 61 dwelling planning application was known and if it were approved. It was also confirmed that Persimmon were going to remove 4 dwellings from the layout and replan the western extent of the development accordingly. A layout had been suggested which would increase the open space and create some interesting townscape (a small ‘square’ rather than just a plainer street) which should be similar to the layout the PC liked way back based on an earlier sketch.
- e) To receive commentary from the Assistant Planner of Persimmon Homes Suffolk regarding Phase 2 – College Park – the meeting was informed that the Assistant Planner for Persimmon had apologised for the upset that had been caused in the community regarding the advertisement signage that had been erected for Phase 2. It was also clarified that no false promises had been given over the timing of its removal but that it had now

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been actioned. It was also confirmed that Persimmon were looking to reduce the numbers in favour of a larger area of open space in the west. A snapshot of the submitted layout compared with the same area following a reduction of 4 dwellings was shared with the council. It was stated that the layout was similar in terms of style, but it had allowed for an opening up of the open space to a large degree. Whilst the meeting would wait for formal re-consultation, it was agreed that the design had reverted back to an unacceptable formal linear plan and appeared to be crammed with little “townscape” in evidence.

- f) To receive an update on the status of Planning Applications DC/23/02429 and DC/23/02430 – the meeting was advised that the applications would not now be submitted to the planning committee at MSDC on 25<sup>th</sup> September. No further updates were available.
- g) Parish Liaison Meeting with Vistry – the meeting noted the amended meeting date of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 9.00am.
- h) Pre-Application meeting with David Barrett Wilson Homes – the meeting noted the amended meeting date of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 2.00pm.
- i) To receive the quarterly update from Housing 21 in relation to Michaelmas Court – the meeting was advised of the quarterly progress report from the Delivery Development Manager in which reference was drawn to the fact that the contractor RG Carter Southern Limited are now past the halfway point of the build and they continue to make good progress. It was reported that the construction is to be about three weeks behind the original programme with works now forecast to be completed in late-March 2025. They anticipate it will be around six weeks between Practical Completion and the first residents moving in, and they have the date of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 pencilled in for this. The topping-out ceremony, celebrating the building reaching its highest point, was held on 7<sup>th</sup> of August. It was a well-attended event, with Cllr Rainbow present representing the parish council. The full update had been circulated to all Councillors previously.
- j) Update on Bloor Homes – the Clerk updated the meeting on the email trail, into which she had been copied, regarding Bloor Homes and construction works and alleged breached of planning regulations. The Case Officer had responded to the allegations and confirmed that the phasing of construction was tied to the delivery of highway improvements within the Legal Agreement that accompanied the planning permission. It was further confirmed that Bloor Homes could not proceed with construction of any residential plot above slab level until the highway works to Fishwick Corner have been completed. Whilst the works to Fishwick Corner are still to be completed, Bloor Homes did not appear to have breached the requirements of the S106 Agreement at Schedule 5 Part 1 (1.1 and 1.2) and as such the work they have undertaken so far was authorised. It was also confirmed that the Case Officer would be speaking with Bloor Homes for the removal of their advertisement signage and will await the outcome of their planning application for advertisement consent before erecting and displaying such signage.

#### 7. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO NETWORK RAIL:

- a) To receive an update on the feasibility study relating to the Thurston Station Level Crossing as carried out by Network Rail in relation to Option Development and Option Design – the meeting noted that there was nothing new to report.

#### 8. 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 –
  - Heath Road** – It was noted that the litter bin has been severely damaged and that this would be replaced with the one held in spare. Following a report that one of the cradle swings had fixings missing it was confirmed this was a High risk and therefore one cradle swing and its chains has been removed. Following consideration of the costs to replace all the swing seats on this swing set it was suggested that only the cradle swing be replaced at this time. It was confirmed that following a high-risk assessment report of the diseased Horse Chestnut tree this will be felled as soon as possible.
  - New Green and Thedwastre Park** – It was confirmed that the damaged matting under the Rotator, the Rope Swing and the Sit up Station had been replaced. The missing handles on the Thurst Activity trail had been ordered for replacement, it was confirmed that Kompan would be asked to ensure removal would not happen again.
  - Recreation Ground** – It was noted that the road sign for School Lane was broken, this will be reported for repair.

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- b) To receive an update on the biodiversity audit of council landholdings from Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Wilder Ecology – It was confirmed that a first draft of the Biodiversity Audit had been received. Detailed information included in the report covered the methodology of the surveys together with evaluation of the biodiversity assets and how the audit fits into a planning and development context. Twelve local green spaces were surveyed as part of the audit with a range of habitats beneficial to wildlife identified. Further ecological networks within the parish have been mapped, the main ones being associated with the hedgerow network bordering lanes, byways and footpaths. The audit will give council a base line of the priority habitats and species to be found in Thurston and the recommendations of how biodiversity can be improved will aid management of local green spaces and decision making for future projects. Members had no further comments to forward to Wilder Ecology and the approved Biodiversity Audit will be circulated when received.
- c) To note that following presentation at a future meeting of the above report, council will be required to consider its Biodiversity Action Plan and consider any actions/strategies to be implemented to ensure compliance with the councils' duty to maintain, improve and enhance biodiversity – It was noted that the recommendations from Wilder Ecology will inform the Action Plan and going forward this will be a working document that provides detailed plans for the conservation and enhancement of our biodiversity assets.
- d) To receive an update on the Wildlife Garden project – the garden is coming to the end of its first annual cycle and surveys of this relatively small area have shown numerous plants species. Installation of bee and bird boxes encourage more flying visitors and additional seating, and signage encourage residents to pass through or sit a while. The garden is definitely past its best for 2024, and the grass and hedges will be cut before additional autumn planting is carried out.
- e) To consider carrying out further heat loss surveys this winter under the Thermal Imaging project – Following discussion on the numbers of residents taking up the offer of thermal imaging for their properties last winter it was agreed to register for the equipment again and promote the scheme to hopefully encourage more people to take advantage of the imagery available together with the information provided on ways to save money on energy bills, keep homes warmer and reduce carbon footprint.
- f) To consider funding a Christmas High Street Safari event at a cost of £549.00 – the meeting noted that the previous High Street Safari events have been successful, the cost remains the same as last year. It was noted that there could be additional costs for some larger boards and prizes if another competition is held by the primary school as before – **it was resolved to support this event again and that the expenditure of £549.00 be approved, aif.**

#### 9. TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO EMERGENCY PLANNING:

- a) To receive an update on the recent watercourse surveys and to consider any mitigation measures to alleviate flooding – the meeting noted the results of the recent walks to survey the watercourse running through the parish from Beyton Road to the Pakenham boundary. It was noted that there are some areas that are congested with vegetation however the majority of the stream bed is clear and the only culvert showing any obstruction is the one east of Church Road/The Planche. Landowners have been reminded of their riparian obligations and most have already taken action to clear vegetation where it is needed to ensure the free flow of water across their land. Professional advice sought from Suffolk County Council Flood and Water engineer confirmed that any work carried out to clear vegetation and remove silt build up would carry no liability for changes in flow further downstream however it is noted that any deepening or widening of watercourses should not be carried out and would incur liability for any flooding caused downstream. It was agreed that no financial contribution could be made to Beyton Parish Council for works to the stream along Beyton Road due to the quote received being for digging out which indicates more than just clearing of vegetation and silt removal.

The Emergency Planning Committee confirmed that further surveys of the watercourse through the parish was planned for later in the year when water levels are at a high to ensure all mitigation measures carried out by landowners have improved the flow and not caused any additional flooding.

#### 10. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS: all to take place in Thurston Community Library –

- a) Policy and Resources Committee – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – still to be confirmed.
- b) Council Meeting – 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 – commencing at 7.00pm in the Community Library, Norton Road.
- c) Council's Committees Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – commencing at 7.00pm in the Community Library, Norton Road.

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**11. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING** – there being no other business the meeting was closed at 8.40pm

**Appendix A - Glossary of Common Abbreviations used**

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

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