

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 19th May 2022 in the Cavendish Hall, Church Road, Thurston as prepared by the Clerk to the Parish Council.

The Chair of the Parish Council, Cllr. Christopher Dashper, took the Chair for the Meeting.

In Attendance: 6 members of the general public; Revd. Ben Edwards; District Councillors Harry Richardson and Austin Davies; PCSO Beverly Swain; Ian Turner, Chair of Cavendish Village Hall; Vicky Pryke, President of Thurston WI; Keith Towers, Chair of Thurston Relief in Need Charity; Richard Fawcett, Chair of Friends of Thurston Library; Melanie Johnson, Group Scout Leader of Thurston 1st Scouts; Parish Councillors Bryan Rainbow; Julian West; Sarah Cornell.

1. Opening and Welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council – the meeting was declared open at 7.30pm and all were thanked for attending.
A statement was read out indicating that, in accordance with the changes in legislation, the public and councillors were permitted to film, record, photograph or use social media to report on the proceedings of the meeting.
A full transcript is available from the Clerk
2. To receive apologies for absence: John Bayes (Head of Thurston Primary academy); Nikki Mattin, Principal, Thurston Community College; Paul Wade (Chair of New Green Management Trust); Parish Councillors Balaam, Bond, Grant, Hay, Haley and Morris; County Councillor Penny Otton; Ellie Longman, Thurston Library Manager; Deputy Clerk Antonia King.
3. To confirm the minutes of the APM of 20th May 2021 – having been previously uploaded onto the website, these were approved by the meeting.
4. To receive a report from PCSO Beverley Swain of the Mid Suffolk SaferNeighbourhood Team – PCSO Swain was invited to submit her report in which she drew the meetings attention to the following:
Fully funded PCSO - PCSO Swain has been in post since the 4th of October 2021 as the fully funded PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) for Thurston. The role requires the PCSO to work alongside regular police officers to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour to improve people's quality of life. The PCSO's are crucial members of the Safer Neighbourhood Team which provide a neighbourhood policing service to local people. Activities that PCSO'S will be involved with in delivering neighbourhood policing services include:
 - Providing high visibility patrols, for public reassurance, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, on either foot, bicycle, or car.
 - Community engagements to understand and address local needs, such as victims of crime, new and emerging communities. Including assisting with inputs and support for Thurston Primary School and Thurston Community College in the absence of School Liaison Officer/Community Engagement Officer.

- Building working relationships with Partner Agencies to help identify solutions to prevent local crime and anti-social behaviour at the earliest stage by tackling the root causes.
- Identifying and reducing community issues, tensions, and fears, including multi-agency problem solving, evidence gathering and early intervention.

The PCSO reports to the Parish council on a weekly basis with updates on issues raised to the Police by members of the public. A Police report is submitted each month for the Thurston Newsletter, this includes useful information relating to topics or areas of concern, including personal safety and changes to the Highway Code. The PCSO will attend monthly Parish Meetings and the Annual Meeting, in their absence another Officer will attend depending on availability.

Street Surveys: street surveys will continue in Thurston which are delivered by PCSO Swain to allow residents to raise any local concerns or issues. Information from residents assists us the identifying what the local issues are and how we should prioritise them. These surveys maybe shared with the Environmental Health, Housing, Parish Council or MSDC where appropriate. Information is handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. Details on how we use this information, and your information rights please visit: www.suffolk.police.uk.

This form can also be filled out anonymously and emailed to stowmarket.snt@suffolk.police.uk or returned to Parish Council Office at New Green.

Street Surveys are not to be used to report a crime. If you are a victim of crime, please contact your local Police www.suffolk.police.uk "Click before you call" where you can make a report in just minutes. All reports made online will be dealt with in exactly the same way a telephone call would be. Always 999 in an emergency.

If there are any new businesses or possible clubs and activities which you would like the PCSO to be involved with they can contact myself by email stowmarket.snt@suffolk.police.uk or beverly.swain1@suffolk.police.uk contact 101 and ask for PCSO 3354 Swain.

Policing during the pandemic - With restrictions being lifted we are now able to get out and about within our communities. Numbers are still high with many people still being affected with Covid. Police Officers will still be adhering to the use of PPE when dealing with public to protect the officers their teams and the public. Officers will continue to test if showing any symptoms.

The following officers are now part of the safer neighbourhood team covering the Mid Suffolk locality:

A/Inspector for Stowmarket SNT: Inspector John Murray

Supervisors for Stowmarket SNT: Sgt Luke Allard 1813; A/Sgt Holly Allen 225

Community Engagement Officer (CEO): PC Stefan Henriksen 1443

Police officers for Stowmarket SNT: PC Spencer Brown 1610; PC Matt Lakin 246; PC Jayne Gardiner 70; PC Colin Gedney 663; PC Chloe Levett 1107; PC Hannah Castleton 847

Link PCSO's for Stowmarket SNT: PCSO David Harvey 3098; PCSO Abigail Durrant 3287; PCSO Phillip Brill 3210

Fully funded PCSO for Thurston: PCSO Bev Swain 3354

Parking: With the Thurston expanding we are noticing further issues with parking within the village. Civil parking enforcement (CPE) powers in Suffolk moved from the Police to Suffolk County Council, on the 6th of April 2020 with the aim of decreasing unlawful parking. These powers have been passed to district and borough authorities to enforce in their own areas.

Police have powers to enforce:

- Dangerous or obstructive parking, including parking on the pavement and 10 metres from any junction. (Where two roads meet)
- Vehicles parked on a pedestrian crossing and zig zag lines
- Moving vehicle violations, such as speeding and going through 'no entry signs'

Suffolk Police focuses its resources based on an assessment of threat, harm, and risk. Dealing with parking offences is a lower priority and complaints of illegal parking will not automatically result in Police attending. They would allocate a unit in a situation where there is a clear offence that is a risk to public safety. If there is an issue with a

particular location causing a community concern, the Safer Neighbourhood team will deal with it appropriately.

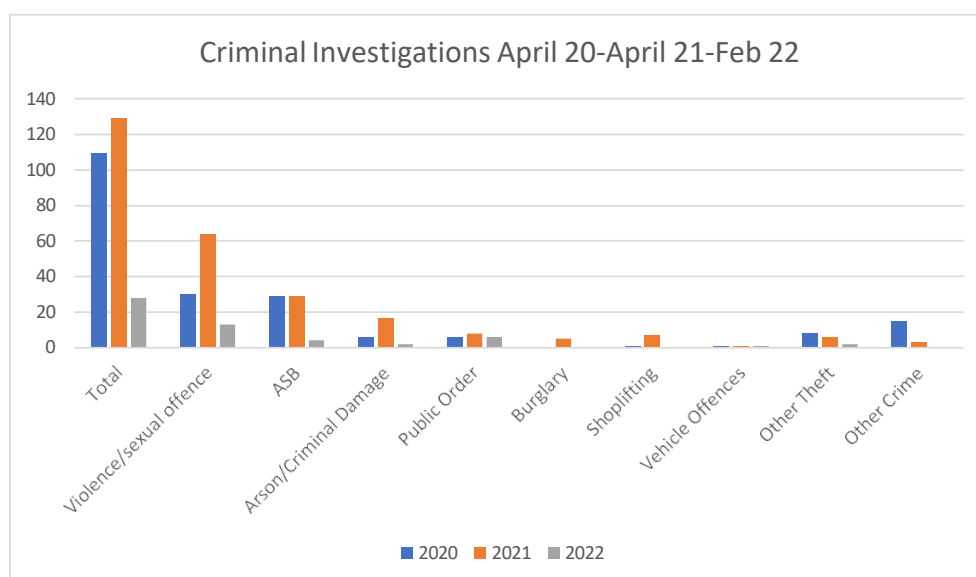
Speeding: There are currently two enforcement sites in Thurston, Barton Road and Station Hill which have been quite over the past year with only 5 offences processed in the year. There will be a further two enforcement sites which will become active in due course on Beyton Road and Ixworth Road. These sites will be monitored in line with the data provided. PC 1443 Henriksen and PCSO Swain will continue to carry out Speed Checks in any areas of concern within Thurston.

Anti-social behaviour: Our focus will continue with ASB. There has been some unwanted behaviour in the village with damage of a new rope swing and graffiti on several signs, bins, and shelters around the village. Stowmarket Safer Neighbourhood Team will continue to monitor areas within the village during late operations in line with our Local tasking priorities which include our pulse patrols if there are areas of concern.

Crime statistics: Below a graph shows the Crime Statistics for Thurston from April 2020 - February 2022. Please note crime statistics can be adjusted and reclassified and are only correct at the point of research, please contact crime admin team for official records. For an explanation on each crime category please visit www.police.uk E.g.- Violence against the person: Includes a range of offences from minor offences such as harassment and common assault, to serious offences such as actual bodily harm and grievous body harm or murder.

Minor types include:

- Harassment
- Assault with injury
- Common Assault
- Wounding/GBH
- Offensive weapon
- Other Violence



For more information on Crime statistics in your area please visit www.police.uk .

From floor – it was stated and supported by the meeting that it was good to have such a proactive PCSO in the village. Thanks were offered to PCSO Swain for her endeavours to date especially with parking issues connected to the primary school.

5. To receive a report from the Chairman of the Parish Council Christopher Dashper - the Chairman of the Parish Council delivered his report which is as follows:
Our last Annual Parish Meeting, in May 2021, marked the return to face-to-face meetings for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic more than a year earlier. The months since have seen a gradual lifting of Covid restrictions as we move towards a

position of living with the Covid-19 in the community- although we recognise that for many the continued presence of the virus is still of significant concern. It would be reassuring to think that the end of restrictions marks a return to normal life, but unfortunately the legacies of Covid-19, the rising cost of living including energy price increases and the appalling situation in the Ukraine prevent us from considering that anything is normal at the moment.

The Parish Council continues to work hard to support our growing community in Thurston. Our services and functions have continued to be delivered despite any restrictions, with a full schedule of official in-person meetings held this year, although many partner meetings continue to be delivered virtually. Planning matters in particular continue to occupy a considerable amount of the available time and resource of the council, but also meeting the needs of the community through the provision and maintenance of leisure and recreational space and equipment, from litter bins to play equipment, street lighting and bus shelters.

Despite ongoing restrictions and concerns around Covid-19, it was encouraging to see how the community come together for the Big Weekend event held in September, when residents new and existing were brought together to showcase the best that the village has to offer. Building on this momentum in the community, the coming year marks an exciting opportunity to identify and support the needs of those living in Thurston, exploring how the Community Infrastructure Levy funding received by the parish as a result of the development in the village can be best used to manage the infrastructure and recreational needs of local residents, now and in the future as our community continues to grow.

Moving on into the main body of the report, this is always my opportunity for a number of important thank you's.

A thank you first to all the members of the council who have committed their time and energy to the parish this year. It is refreshing to see that for the first time in a long while we currently have a full complement of 11 councillors working to try and achieve the best for the village. Since my last report, councillors Keith Towers, John Thurlbourn and Nigel Turner have left the council, while Graham Balaam, Jonathan Grant, John Priscott and Liz Bond have joined the council recently. My thanks again to Vice Chairman Brian Rainbow, for supporting myself and Vicky, Clerk to the Council and to all the councillors, including Barbara Morris, Derrick Haley, Julian West, Sarah Cornell and James Hay for serving as part of our committees including Planning, Recreational and Leisure Facilities, Emergency Planning and the Environment Awareness and Climate Committee. Progress on further developing the new Youth Council has been impacted by Covid-19, but we will be looking to develop this further now that we have a full complement of councillors once more.

To Steve, our litter picker for maintaining the public areas and to Trevor our village handyman for maintenance and repairs around the village. Thanks also to our Suffolk County Councillor, Penny Otton and Mid Suffolk Councillor Harry Richardson for their support on county and district issues including road infrastructure and planning. We welcome Councillor Austin Davies, newly elected as District Councillor and extend our thanks to his predecessor, Wendy Turner for her support over the last few years, particularly with regard to the protection of the natural environment in Thurston.

And thanks, as always, to Vicky and to Antonia for continuing to manage the ever-growing range of subjects the council is involved. As the village expands and the council becomes responsible for more aspects of everyday life, our team continue to maintain the high standards of excellence, particularly in financial management, community and stakeholder engagement and planning. In every way, the council continues to exceed expected standards and to set the benchmark for others.

In planning and development matters, four of the five significant housing development sites in Thurston are now significantly underway and new homes are being occupied. As a council, our engagement with the majority of the developers has now expanded to ensuring that facilities such as play areas, landscaping and tree planting which accompany the developments meet the original planning approvals and are appropriate

for the village. Our purpose is to ensure that the village has a good range of services, complimentary and attractive and accessible to all.

In September 2021, Thurston's new primary school welcomed the first pupils to an excellent new facility for the village, supporting the education of young people in the village for many years to come.

Finally on planning, the biggest story of the year is undoubtedly the news that after a hearing in October 2021, the High Court ruled in favour of Thurston in the case against Mid Suffolk District Council's consent of planning for the construction of 210 homes on land south of Beyton Road. Following the hearing, the judge ruled that Mid Suffolk had misled the Planning Committee on the weight attributable to the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and that the tilted balance had been incorrectly applied to justify the development. The planning permission was accordingly ordered to be quashed and returned for re-determination. Thanks are extended to our legal team at Ashtons Legal for their work on achieving this decision and once again to Vicky for the volume of work that has gone into this decision. Mid Suffolk council have determined to seek leave to appeal of the decision and we will obviously keep residents updated on the progress in this matter.

We are pleased to be able to support local organisations each year with small grants so that they can provide services to support our residents. Organisations supported over the last year include: New Green Community Trust for maintenance of the open space, The Cavendish Hall for ongoing maintenance of the building, Thurston Scouts to help purchase two event shelters, Headway Suffolk and the Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice Bureau to support members of the community, Team Altitude, a student engineering team from Thurston Community College, Fresh Start New Beginnings and St Edmundsbury Newstalk, St Peters Church and the Friends of Thurston Library. Organisations within the village who provide services to local residents, can apply for a grant using a simple application form available from the Clerk and the request will then be considered by the Parish Council. Requests for grant support from organisations based outside the village including regional groups may be considered where there is or has been a recognisable benefit to Thurston.

We have also continued to deploy our Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, supporting a number of projects in the village over the last year, including new Noticeboards £5,456; PCSO contract £39,300; various streetlight improvements including new light columns; Thurston pre-school £30k; New Green buggy store £6,639 and the Cocowave swing, New Green £12,826.

Thurston Parish Council has a number of responsibilities many of which have a financial implication, including maintaining the village sports, recreational and play facilities and equipment, some street lighting and general village maintenance and litter clearance. The village also fully funds its own Police Community Support Officer for Thurston, Beverly Swain. The combined cost of these services along with the core running costs of the parish council is supported by the annual precept, funded by the Council Tax paid by each household. For 2022/23 the Parish Council has agreed a small rise in the precept of £4.84 per annum or just over 8 pence per week for a Band D Property. This increase will support the continued investment in local services and the accompanying administration and will help to offset inflationary rises in goods and services. In general financial terms, as income to the parish has risen as a result of the receipt of funds such as the Community Infrastructure Levy there is a greater emphasis on accountability and ensuring financial information is provided in a transparent and concise manner. All papers including those relating to finance are uploaded to the website for perusal by Councillors and members of the public ahead of all meetings.

Our monthly Parish Council meeting is held on the first Wednesday of every month at the library. Anyone can attend the Parish Council meetings and raise an issue or an area of concern in public forum. The public are also invited to attend our other committee meetings including Planning, Recreational and Leisure Facilities and the Environment Awareness and Climate Committee, all of which are held at the library. The dates of all these meetings are advertised on the notice boards around the village and on the Thurston website.

Moving forward, key tasks for the council in the coming year include:

- Following up on the recent leisure and recreation facilities survey, establishing a steering group to take forward plans to deliver projects identified by the community.
- Working in partnership with the New Green Trust to bring forward the planned recycling area for the benefit of the village.
- Adopting the management of the New Green open space areas, looking in particular at the wildlife area and improving the facility for the benefit of all local residents.
- Continuing to work with all partners to support residents, new and existing, to build a vibrant community and provide the services to support their needs.

Questions raised by the meeting: none were raised.

6. To receive a report from County Councillor Penny Otton – County Councillor Penny Otton had previously submitted her written report in which she drew the meeting’s attention to the following –

This year has continued to be “dogged” by COVID which is even now affecting many schools and businesses. However, I’m sure we all agree the war in Ukraine has left us all feeling shocked and helpless. I know many people are now registering to house refugees and I have sent all my parishes the current information we have on how Suffolk will respond, and what is required to house them. A motion to council condemning Russia, action was agreed unanimously.

Motions to Council - over the past year we are pleased to get full support to make 20mph enforceable, support local energy companies, and against violence against women and girls. I am doing one on 19th May about sewerage discharge into our rivers.

Petition on Highways Contract: my group have started a petition to bring the highways contract back in house. We believe the costs that Keir quote are unacceptable.

Parking “H” MARKING Barton Road - at long last we seem to have got these replaced. Having set up a site meeting with the Parish council, highways, your PCSO areas around the college and Barton have been identified for parking restrictions.

Thurston Rail Crossin - this is becoming a scandal, Why Network rail have not produced their feasibility study is unbelievable. I and all your councillors continue to “shout” at all the relevant people.

State on the new verges on Ixworth Road: this has been reported many times and is the responsibility of the developer.

Highways - Thurston has been subjected to so much disruption due to all the new developments, I and the parish council and residents have had to continually report or challenge highways to get things sorted out. It would take all night to go through them all.

Locality Budge - I am pleased to have been able to help with the cost of your new notice boards, the new kitchen at Cavendish hall, and the wildflower meadow at the College has now been completed.

Biodiversity Recommendations to Enhance: Suffolk County Council will be doing more for the county’s natural environment, as it confirmed plans to enhance the biodiversity of at least 30% of its land by 2030. Examples include planting more hedgerows, improving highway trees, and developing nature-based flood management solutions.

Budget Meeting - GLI Amendments Declined. Suffolk County Council voted in their budget for 2022-23. and the Conservative’s did not take the maximum social care precept to fund adult care allowed by Government. Suffolk GLI Group highlighted the need to invest more in adult social care.

Carbon Budget - The first Carbon Budget for Suffolk The Carbon Budget is aimed to help us understand the level of emissions the Council are responsible for and helps to achieve the Council’s ambition of being carbon-neutral by 2030.

Report into SEND Provision: Review & Recommendations - Suffolk County Council commissioned an independent review into Special Educational Needs and Disability

provision. The report found severe failings in the delivery of Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans for children.

Bus Back Better - Initiative from the Department for Transport (DfT). The Bus Back Better scheme was launched this year, aimed at updating, expanding, and improving our bus services in Great Britain. The Cabinet at Suffolk County Council approved a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) submitted to Government, while Suffolk County Council which was unsuccessful. I have asked if a KATCH response service can be set up in this area (Katch is a bookable electric bus service).

New Investment in Drainage and Footway Infrastructure - the Cabinet approved £10m to replace broken pipes and new installations, as well as an additional £10m to increase the maintenance of selected footways in Suffolk.

Questions raised by meeting: none raised from the floor.

7. To receive a report from District Councillors Harry Richardson and Austin Davies - District Councillor Harry Richardson was invited to submit his report in which he drew the meeting's attention to the following:

Covid-19 Response and Community Grants - As part of Suffolk's county-wide Covid recovery during the 2021/2022 financial year, the following amounts have been allocated from the Mid Suffolk Community Grant allocation of Suffolk Community Restart funding:

- £313,226.26 has been allocated to 24 voluntary/community organisations from Capital Grants to develop/enhance community facilities.
- £10,815.75 has been allocated to 10 voluntary/community organisations from Minor Grants.
- £228,235.00 has been awarded to 19 organisations that include Mid Suffolk CAB, Community Action Suffolk, Rural Coffee Caravan, etc, which provide services across the District, through the Revenue Grant funding scheme.
- £94,456.47 Suffolk Community Restart funding has been allocated to 68 different voluntary and community organisations since the funding launched in May 2021.

Gateway 14 - Gateway 14, near Stowmarket, was officially designated as a tax site as part of Freeport East in December last year. The tax reliefs that will be available in the designated tax sites are; Stamp Duty Land Tax Relief, Enhanced Capital Allowances, Enhanced Structures and Buildings Allowance, National Insurance Contributions rate relief and business rates relief. Freeport East will create a global trade hub, resulting in economic growth, bringing more jobs and prosperity to the region. The project will accelerate opportunities in green energy and will help level-up the national economy. In addition to the three tax sites, Freeport East will have customs sites at Felixstowe, Harwich, Gateway 14, Port One Logistics Park, Horsely Cross, Uniserve and PD Ports.

£5.1m for Mid Suffolk recovery - An investment pledge of £5.1million has been made by Mid Suffolk District Council to help deliver a range of projects to boost the district's recovery from the impact of the Covid pandemic.

At November's meeting, Mid Suffolk District Council's cabinet allocated the seven-figure sum, announced in February, to priority areas around communities, environment, economy, customers, housing and wellbeing, following a series of cross-party task groups to discuss areas in need of support. The fund allocations are split across 39 projects. Among the headline schemes are £75,000 of support for domestic abuse victims, including security measures like alarms and stronger locks; a £300,000 loan fund for community land trusts to obtain deposits for mortgages; £100,000 for a targeted apprenticeship scheme for those at risk of homelessness; £100,000 towards increasing aspirations for young people, including youth market stalls and youth social prescribing, and £100,000 to fund a business case for a skills and innovation centre at Gateway 14.

Further £100,000 grants will go towards supporting a sustainable travel plan, supporting town centre visions for Stowmarket, Needham Market and Eye, and Covid recovery grants for community groups, while £38,000 will go towards expanding the

Active Schools programme to tackle obesity in schools, and £30,000 will fund the continuation of school holiday activity programmes.

Delay to Joint Local Plan - Public examination of the Local Plan, the strategic outline for future development of the districts, was paused last year to allow the Mid Suffolk further time to review their evidence. An exploratory meeting was held with the councils and inspectors on 16th December during which a proposed work programme was agreed that would see the councils have an adopted plan next year, helping to shape the future for Babergh and Mid Suffolk's communities. The plan - which outlines housing requirements and considers the long-term impact of climate change, including flood risk, water supply and biodiversity, as well as other matters such as supporting the economy and our town centres - is now nearing the final stages of the process. This involves a review by Planning Inspectors, who are appointed by the Secretary of State, to carry out an independent examination before recommending whether or not it can be adopted. The Inspectors' proposals, agreed on Thursday, will see the councils now proceed with their Joint Local Plan in two parts. Important social, economic and environmental objectives will be put in place first, while remaining work on spatial strategy matters and housing allocations are addressed in part two. This means the councils will have an up-to-date plan for decision making.

Budget 2022 / 23 - Mid Suffolk District Council has frozen its element of council tax this year - helping residents through post-pandemic recovery while still investing in priority areas to improve quality of life. The 2022/23 budget, which was approved unanimously by councillors at February's full Council meeting, allows continued investment in the council's strategic priorities, including the economic regeneration of the district, and tackling climate change. This also included a proposal from the Green and Liberal Democrat group for a trial of two electric buses to be used across Mid Suffolk.

Thurston Judicial Review - In response to the High Court's decision to uphold the Judicial Review launched by Thurston Parish Council, Mid Suffolk have confirmed in the last week that they have sought leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal. This decision has been made by the Monitoring Officer and Assistant Director for Planning in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Planning. The Council has made this decision on the basis that their legal team has advised them of a 'reasonable prospect of success' at appeal. This application does not bind the Council if, should permission be granted, it subsequently declines to appeal the High Court's original decision. Officers at Mid Suffolk believe that the outcome of the application will be reached by May at the earliest. If permission for an appeal is granted, and Mid Suffolk chooses to pursue this, then the final appeal decision would likely be made in the autumn.

Corporate Peer Review - Mid Suffolk is this week undertaking a corporate peer review, something which Councils are obliged to do once every 5 years. It offers Mid Suffolk the opportunity to validate our direction of travel and approach; and test, stretch and further evolve our thinking for the future. It covers five compulsory elements and three additional areas which we have asked the peer review team to explore:

- Local priorities and outcomes (compulsory)
- Organisational and place leadership (compulsory)
- Governance and culture (compulsory)
- Financial planning and management (compulsory)
- Capacity for improvement (compulsory)
- Our approach to well-being (additional)
- The future and sustainability of partnership working between Babergh and Mid Suffolk (additional)
- Pace and our capacity to deliver (additional)

The outcome of a separate peer review last November, focusing specifically on planning, is due to be published imminently with a set of recommendations for improvement. These do not however overlap with the findings of the Judicial Review.

With regards to Locality Budgets = he was pleased to have supported funding for audio visual in Cavendish Hall and 1st Thurston Scouts. He was involved in ongoing matters

relating to the Thurston Station Building, Thurston Station crossing, skatepark in memory of Ben Wragge and dedicated site for Thurston Football Club.

Questions raised by meeting: there were none submitted.

District Councillor Austin Davies was invited to submit his report in which he briefly mentioned MSDC's budget and increases to council rents. His formal report made mention of the following matters:

MSDC Meetings - Budget 2022 was presented with a surplus of £5.1 M which is planned to be spent by March 2023. By accepting the Green Party/Lib Dem proposal to invest £820K in creating a new electrically powered scheduled bus service for the poorly serviced, non-competitive areas of mid Suffolk, the budget was passed unanimously. MSDC will not be increasing its council tax charge this year

Mid Suffolk Council was held on 21st of April. We discussed and agreed new standards for District Councillors, support for Ukraine and requested the use of hybrid council meetings. A motion to use an approach developed by the New Forest Council on a tool-box to reduce carbon footprints

Peer reviews - MSDC underwent a peer review with the outcome expected next month. November's peer review of the planning department was published. Good performance was noted in many areas, however, a break down in trust between Officers and Councillors was noted. Meetings lasting 9 to 11 hours were thought to lead to poor quality decisions. At least 10 recommendations were made in this report which included a pathway to rebuilding trust.

Housing Revenue Account - Housing Revenue Account was discussed. Objections were raised to the 4.1% increase in council rents by the Green Party/Lib Dem opposition. Sheltered housing and garage rents will not be increased.

Mid Suffolk District Council tenants have been selected to take part in a satisfaction survey during late March and Early April. Results available in May.

Council Tax - MSDC is arranging for those eligible in bands A to D to receive their £150 central government payment, whether they pay by direct debit or cheque etc.

Gateway 14 - The ground-breaking ceremony has now taken place at the Gateway 14 site. The development is on track with all Councillors being briefed on progress and issues. All buildings have the capacity to have solar panels, however, the National Grid does not have the local capacity to accept the levels of electricity this site could generate. MSDC officers have been asked to explore possibilities including 'Green Hydrogen' generation. Neighbourhood Planning - MSDC applied for to 'seek leave to appeal the Thurston judicial review into the granting of planning permission for 210 new homes off Beyton Road. The allegation that the planning committee had been wrongly advised on the weight given to the Neighbourhood Plan, which had not allocated that site for development, was upheld by the High Court. (this may be reading too much into things, however, the proposed site has been sown to spring cereal)

Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - About 200 potential schemes are summarised within this report which will have been submitted to cabinet on the 4th of April. Most of the concerns relating to cycling within Thurston have been covered, including School Road and the shared path across New Green

MSDC ring fenced CIL - Officials briefed your Ward Councillors on the MSDC ring fenced CIL position. Of the £3.385 Million, only £2.215 Million is currently unallocated. Further extension to Thurston Community College is planned. Then there are 3 emerging bids. These are Thurston rail station improvement, Site for a MUGA and a suitable site for a skateboard park. It was explained that, where residents from surrounding communities use a facility, that communities CIL fund can be proportionally allocated to create this new infrastructure.

Thurston Library has now submitted a CIL enquiry (sponsored by A Davies) with a proposal to expand its floor area to enable it to provide a public toilet, rooms for IT access groups (study areas, social meeting spaces, maker spaces). Thurston Library has recently invested in the children's area to great effect and would now wish to invest in Teen areas and additional inclusion services.

Planning - MSDC passed the application for 54-unit extra care affordable housing scheme comprising 40 apartments, 14 bungalows and communal areas.

Ukrainian support - Members of our community have welcomed the first Ukrainian refugees into their homes. Their children are joining appropriate local schools. MSDC carries the responsibility for inspecting prospective homes whilst the SCC is responsible for all other aspects of our support.

Questions raised by meeting: there were none raised.

8. To receive reports from Parish Council Representatives -
 - i. Recreational Ground Trust (304946) - Cllr. Rainbow as Chair of the Recreational and Leisure Facilities Committee was invited to submit his report on the works of the Committee in which he reported that:

You may recall that it was decided in the past that due to more than just looking after the Recreation Ground the Thurston Recreation Ground Charity Committee would be known as the Recreational Facilities Committee. At the Parish Committee meeting on 02 March 22 it was agreed that responsibility for leisure should be added to the committee title to accommodate additional responsibilities coming forth to the Parish Council. Over the last year the Committee has continued with the upkeep of play equipment & play areas at Heath Road, Thedwastre Park (New Green) and the Recreation Ground at Church Road in addition since February the Parish Council has taken over responsibility for the Open Space at New Green. The Gym Trail at New Green was extended in December 21 to include a Cocowave swing paid from the Parish Council's CIL fund. External works to the Recreation Ground Pavilion were completed last summer this included a new roof & painting to timber work. In the week commencing 07 March trees around the Recreation Ground highlighted in an earlier survey had works carried out. Over the last year the Recreation Ground was used by the Football Club & the Cricket Club. As Covid restrictions have been lifted the Changing Rooms are being used by the Football Club and the Pavilion by French for Tots (during Term Time) & the Marjon Club. Play equipment at Heath Road & New Green including Thedwastre Park are well used but unfortunately both sites have suffered vandalism recently. Vandalism and antisocial behaviour at the recreation Ground has been greatly reduced since the introduction of CCTV including ANPR (automatic number plate recognition). New benches have been installed at the Recreation Ground and additional benches have been installed at Heath Road, Thedwastre Park and the Open space between St Peters Way & Cavendish Close, also additional dog waste bins have been installed throughout the village. Unfortunately, as previously reported the four developers at present building in the village have had minimal engagement regarding open spaces & play equipment despite promises being made when planning was granted, but we are not giving up on hoping to achieve a positive outcome for the village. Future plans include but are not limited to a survey of trees on New Green and study for upgrade of play equipment at Heath Road and additional benches are being installed in the village, also additional dog waste bins have been installed throughout the village. Unfortunately, as previously reported, the four developers at present building in the village have had minimal engagement regarding open spaces & play equipment despite promises being made when planning was granted, but we are not giving up on hoping to achieve a positive outcome for the village. Future Plans for the Parish Council include a survey of trees on New Green and study for upgrade of play equipment at Heath Road.
 - ii. Thurston Footpaths - Cllr. Barbara Morris, the parish council appointed Footpath Warden, was invited to submit her report in which she drew the meeting's attention to the following:

Thurston is fortunate to have a wonderful network of footpaths leading to the countryside and neighbouring villages. For many years Jannette Service and her husband Barry have monitored these footpaths on behalf of Thurston Parish Council and were instrumental in compiling the current footpath map. The Parish Council Climate and Awareness Committee are progressing with an additional footpath map

leaflet which will contain information about footpaths that link to Pakenham's network of footpath walks. This leaflet will include circular walks from Thurston to Pakenham Fen, Pakenham Water Mill and the Suffolk Wildlife's bird hide overlooking Micklemere. The current footpath leaflet is available from the Parish Council office and the Library. This leaflet gives details of 5 circular walks, but these can lead into other parishes, including Pakenham, Norton, Tostock, Beyton. You can walk as far or as little as you wish. It is pleasing to see the footpaths in the village continuing to be well used. It is, however, important that users keep to the footpaths as well as keeping their dogs under control to avoid damaging farmer's crops, upsetting other walkers and causing distress to animals and ground nesting birds. We need to remind users to make sure any litter is taken home including used dog waste bags so that we protect our valuable countryside. There are now a number of dog waste bins to be found in the village in addition to the normal waste bins to help with this ongoing problem. It is appreciated that a number of residents use the opportunity to pick up any litter when going for a walk. Should walkers come across a problem with footpaths please report the issue to either the Parish Clerk or direct to Suffolk County Council using their easy-to-use online facility.

- iii. Thurston Tree Warden - Cllr. James Hay, the parish council appointed Tree Warden, was invited to submit his report in which he drew the meeting's attention to the following:

With three major storms in February; Dudley, Eunice, and Franklin many of the trees in Thurston have taken a hammering. A new record wind gust of 122MPH was recorded at the Needles Old Battery on the Isle of White and a gust of 90 mph was detected on the farm weathervane before it fell over. Suffolk highways must be praised for the speed that many of the fallen trees were cleared. After any storm, this leaves gaps to be planted up. The Suffolk Tree Warden Network has started a series of Tree Nurseries around the county, and we have two in the village. The plan for these is to grow young trees from locally saved seeds in the area. Protecting local tree species is a great way of preserving heritage trees and protecting species from new diseases. We are always looking for sites to put new trees in the village and any suggestions are greatly appreciated. These areas can be in private gardens and open space if there is landowners' permission. The new Churchyard hedge planting, recently undertaken, contains plants that hopefully will grow into trees. All materials used were from Suffolk Tree Warden Network and the Woodland Trust. One of the projects we would like to complete over the next year is to set a record of all the different Tree Protection Orders (TPO) on the various trees in the Parish and have this in an 'easy to access' area of the public domain. This would save confusion and increase recognition of which trees within the parish have such protections.

- iv. Thurston Local Recorder - Cllr. Barbara Morris, the parish appointed Local Recorder, was invited to submit her report in which she drew the meeting's attention to the following:

The role of the Local Recorder is to keep a record of events taking place in Thurston at the present time. The Thurston Newsletter is a good record of information and thus copies are kept. Reading old copies of this publication can prove very interesting. Newspaper articles relating to Thurston are also kept, in addition to flyers of social events. Official publications, such as, Thurston's Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting documents, are also kept as hard copies although these can be found online. The Local Recorder is also responsible for articles, photographs etc from times past. Thurston is lucky to have a wealth of information mainly because of the work achieved by two previous recorders. There are some wonderful photographs, including copies of some of the Spanton Jarman photographs and also photographs taken in the 1960's/1970's by a local professional photographer, Mr Wood. One of the previous Recorders took photographs of Thurston during the 1980's and produced a document comparing them with earlier photographs. Photographs are a very valuable record showing the changes through the years. As a Local Recorder you are supported by the Suffolk Local History Council, which holds an annual Recorder's Day Conference which is very enjoyable as well as informative. On Saturday 23rd April

I attended the annual Recorders Day Conference held at Elmswell, the first since Covid. Once again it was an excellent day and very well attended.

It has been suggested that a record be made of all the Thurston residents who served their country in WW2, and indeed any other conflict following WW1. In St Peter's Church, Thurston there is an interesting folder containing a good amount of detail of all Thurston men who fought and died in WW1. A request was placed in the April edition of the Thurston Newsletter for someone to come forward to take on this task. In the Cavendish Hall there is a list of 40 or so residents who served in WW1, but there is no similar record for other conflicts since. Following the article in the April newsletter I am delighted to say the lady who is responsible for the excellent WW1 folder to be found in St Peters, has come forward to help with this project. We hope to meet and discuss the way forward with this project during May.

9. To receive reports from Village Organisations

- i. 1st Thurston Scouts – the Group Scout Leader was invited to submit her report in which she stated:

It is lovely to be back to face-to-face scouting - albeit at a reduced level over the past year. All 3 sections have been meeting regularly since April 2021. Our numbers had reduced from 85 to 37 youth members by the time that we were able to meet again. This rose to 47 by January 2022's census - and is currently standing at 66.

We also currently have 8 Young Leaders (14-18-year-olds) working across the Group – it's lovely to know that our young people don't want to leave us at 14 - we must be doing something right!

Group events: Our first group-wide event since the lockdowns was run in May 2021 by Suffolk Scouting at Bradfield Park Campsite. Very limited numbers but everyone enjoyed the activities that they put on for us. In September we adopted the Brain Tumour Charity as the organisation that we would raise funds for this year. We attended Thurston's 'Big Weekend' where we set up 2 altar-fires (at the Cavendish Hall on the Saturday and at the new Primary School on the Sunday) and offered the public the opportunity of making and cooking their own s'mores and dampers (pastry twists). We had some adult interest which we are still pursuing and added some new youth members for our sections and our Waiting List. We also had our collection buckets out for donations towards the Brain Tumour Charity. In November we joined the Church in the laying of wreaths at the war memorial (the area having been tidied up by our Scouts the day before) at Thurston's Remembrance Day Service. It was lovely to have a short parade and service – a stark contrast to the previous year where I laid our wreath on my own the day before Remembrance Sunday. Our Christingle Service in December raised £40 for the Children's Society, and we had a Christmas Tree displayed at the church – with the theme of 'Hopes and Dreams. During February half term we held an early Easter Family Bingo night and raised over £250 for the Brain Tumour Charity. We are now looking forward to getting back to normal during 2022. We will be taking part in the BSE District's St George's Day Parade on April 24th (St George is the Patron Saint of Scouting), where all members of Scouting and Girl Guiding renewed their promises. Woolpit Steam Rally is back. This is our major fundraising event of the year (we are given a donation in return for selling programmes on the gate and they allow us to camp there for the weekend). We have missed out on this for the past 2 years. This will be our first actual camp since the Coronavirus Pandemic hit us. I will shortly be pursuing grant funding for some more tents so that we can replace our 10-man troop tents in order to accommodate smaller groups at camps and remain Covid safe. We are awaiting receipt of funding from Mid Suffolk Locality Budget and the outcome of a further grant that has been submitted. I am planning an end of Term joint family event for all Thurston's Beavers, Cubs & Scouts – again something we haven't been able to have for 2 years. The County is hosting "Suffolk Punch '22" in August. This is a County-wide 5-day camp for Scouts and Explorers with a dedicated Activity Day for our Beavers and Cubs.

Finances: As we have not had any fundraising activities during the year we have tried to reduce the Group's day-to-day expenses as much as we can. On setting the Membership Fees for 2022, the Executive Committee decided not to increase them, in fact we gave a small reduction for the first term of 2022 as we were not yet back to 'normal' activities. A huge thank you to our Treasurer for looking after our finances for us.

Leadership - we have managed to keep on top of all mandatory training, appointment reviews and DBS renewals throughout the past year. All relevant Leaders have also recently completed their First Aid training. We lost our Beaver Leader in September as Diane took a step back from face-to-face Beavers. Phil stepped forward to ensure that Beavers continued, although he had previously indicated that he would be retiring at Christmas, he has postponed his retirement until the end of the summer term. We have advertised locally for adult help. If anyone knows anyone who has any spare time on Monday evenings and think they could add to the fun we have at Beavers please do not hesitate to contact me for a chat. We would also welcome regular Adult help in both Cubs and Scouts.

A massive THANK YOU to all of Thurston's Leaders and Executive Committee for all of their support throughout the year. I could not have negotiated all the newly imposed (and constantly changing) rules and regulations without them organising the weekly sessions, which enabled me to concentrate on the Group activities and business side of the Group.

- ii. Cavendish Hall – the Chair of the Cavendish Hall Management Committee was invited to submit his report in which he commented:

COVID we were unable to meet during the early stages of 2021. The youth groups Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Brownies were governed by their organisations. Bridge, WI, and French classes followed suit, no outside parties so the only groups that kept us going during this period were the fitness groups.

During this period we had our new kitchen fitted and we launched this at the Thurston Big Weekend, inviting everyone from the village to hopefully get a feel of what Thurston and Cavendish hall have to offer, young and old. Covid restrictions are easing, and most groups are returning.

A new heating system, solar panels, air source heat pump and new thermostatic controls have now been installed along with the air source heat pump and solar panels on the roof along with storage batteries. This has made Cavendish hall a very environmentally friendly venue. Thanks were offered to the Parish Council for its assistance with funding of this project.

Future development will see – installation of a projector, screen, PA, and loop system, chairs and the rear garden landscape plans.

The village is expanding, and everybody's expectations are very high just like a business if we stand still we go backwards. Without the dedication and hard work of the Trustees and committee members all this would not be possible.

- iii. New Green Centre Management Committee – The Chair of the New Green Management Trust had submitted a written report which stated:

like everyone else the last year has been difficult due to the Covid pandemic, with people being very cautious, and this has affected the usage, however this allowed us to continue to review the use of our facilities and continue to improve. During the periods of lockdown we attempted to make the hall available to groups that provided services that were allowed to continue to operate for the benefit of groups that provided needed assistance, for example One Life who tutor and exercise obese children. We have retained some of these new hirers, and they currently have waiting lists, as we are lacking hall time availability. Amongst some of the improvements we have made during the last 12 months include, replacement security system, new fire alarm system, refurbishment of the small bar (which was previously a storeroom), new pathway from the path to the patio. The café has become more community focused and is now being used a lot more by all age groups. The parklands continued to get used and a new Cocowave has been installed, however the swing has had malicious vandalism and is currently awaiting repair.

We were involved with the village Big Weekend, and with the planning for this and the number of people who used the facilities, hammered home a couple of important points. The Garden area is a unique selling point that can add many facilities for the village, to this end the parasols have been vastly upgraded, and only last week we had delivered 8 new outdoor picnic tables, ready for the summer. We also realized that we had the facility to provide entertainment facilities not available currently in the village and held a New Year's Party which was successful. Last weekend we held our first of what hopefully will be monthly bingo sessions, we are reviewing the possibility of having cinema facilities with regular showings for all ages.

We have been working with the Parish Council with what at the onset seemed a simple project of locating a re-cycling collection facility within the village, for various reasons this has become protracted, but hopefully in the next few weeks work can commence on its installation. The website is currently being revamped and should be launched very soon to replace the outdated one that we can no longer maintain. Due to the increased trade through the café, we will be re-structuring and from 1st April the café and events will be the responsibility of Thurst CIC, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Trust (For reference CIC stands for Community Interest Company, which is a not-for-profit company). The Trustees would like to thank our landlord, and the Parish Council for their continued support, and on a personal note I would like to thank the Trustees for their work and efforts during a difficult period.

- iv. Friends of Thurston Library – The Chair of the Friends of Thurston Library was invited to submit his report in which he drew the meeting's attention to the following:

E Ellie Longman arrived as Library Manager in Spring 2021. Her impact has been amazing: the library is flourishing as never before. Impacted like so many organisations by Covid-19, online activity was, for some of the year, particularly important. Ellie introduced Baby Bounce and Thursday Bakes - online recipes for people – soon after her arrival and introduced Ellie's Saturday Story online. On Suffolk Libraries Day on 20 March 2021 the Friends Group raised over £500 for Suffolk Libraries. Suffolk Libraries is a charity and relies upon fund raising to supplement its income from Suffolk County Council. A thriving service, Suffolk Libraries offers a range of services and support for Suffolk communities that is not equalled anywhere else in the country. August saw the re-emergence of Lego Club on a Sunday – the pride and joy of what young people make can be seen both in the activity and on display in the library. You cannot underestimate the impact of such activity on the health and development of children. In September, the library led the village-wide Big Weekend and raised money for Suffolk Mind. During the weekend, the Nick Sharratt drawing workshop was popular. That month Ancestry Club resumed with an increasing number of people researching their family history with a volunteer who comes twice a month from near Ipswich. In October 'The Last Tuesday of the Month Baking Club' was started by Ellie. You will have to join the queue to sample and judge the delicacies produced by its members! In December, the library led the Thurston Christmas Tree Festival along with St Peter's Church. Saturday Story in the library resumed. Friday Sewcial brings together a dedicated group of sewing aficionados and restarted in the New Year. Suffolk Libraries Day events this month saw a popular talk All about Owls by Suffolk Owl Sanctuary, an owl-drawing session by our Librarian's daughter, Izzi, an owl hunt in the library and re-feathering of Oona the Owl by decorated feathers, all financed by donation. Oona is the mascot of Suffolk Libraries. The Friends Watercolour Art Club resumed from the end of March. We are pleased to see the resumption of social and fundraising activities. On 26th March The 12th NigHT BaNd performed at the Cavendish Hall in an event organised by the Trustees of the Hall and Thurston Library Friends – good time rock 'n' roll, blues and pop, a live performance with something to please everyone. The postponed 'Posh or Not' wine tasting took place at the end of April. On 6 May, Charles Garland, Thurston's own Dad's Army producer (among many other things) gave a talk on his amazing life in television and other media. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations will include the publication of a Platinum Pudding recipe book.

During the pandemic over 500 boxes of lateral Flow tests were handed out. Whenever the library has been open, we have sold books surplus to requirements to library users from our book trolley. Numbers using the library continue to grow; existing and new residents alike are increasingly using its services and participating in its events. We now have over 800 active library customers. Shortly, a new Home Library Service for Thurston and the area will be provided from the library. And to begin to answer an urgent need of young people the library will be running a new 'Chat 'n' Chill' afterschool space for 13-16-year-olds on Tuesdays from 3.15pm after the Easter holidays. Thurston Library and its Friends Group are keen to innovate and continue to provide a real hub for Thurston and the area served - fulfilling residents ambitions and needs.

- v. St Peter's Church - *the Revd. Ben Edwards was invited to submit his report in which he stated that:*

He has enjoyed being the vicar. St Peter's - able to increase number of services in the church - 1st & 2nd services of the month in Thurston. Church service to be commenced in the Primary School later in the year. Some of the highlights - working with Primary School - collective worship. Christmas Tree Festival very well supported and very pleased to get so many people into the Church. Thanks were offered to Richard Fawcett for his work on the lighting in the Church. Six months in, matters progress slowly and he is keen to get to know parishioners better.

- vi. Thurston Community College - Nikki Mattin, Principal of Thurston Community College was invited to submit her report in which she drew the meeting's attention to the following:

Covid 19 - This is the third Academic Year we have experienced disruption due to the pandemic. The summer exams were awarded by Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) due to the cancellation of formal examinations. These results were then validated by the exam boards and Thurston had excellent positive feedback. Our sixth form continued to perform strongly with many students heading to top universities to study a variety of subjects. Since September 2021 the school has returned fulltime but at times experienced high numbers of students testing positive for Covid 19. Mid-October 2021 and Mid-January 2022 were peak periods for infection. The College has continued to follow all government guidelines and liaised regularly with the local Suffolk Team. The CO2 monitors enabled us to create a 'map' of key areas for ventilation. We have been lucky in that no area has risen above the expected CO2 level.

Building and Site - Our roofing repairs are approaching completion and it is hoped that all scaffolding will be down by Easter 2022. Due to the planned expansion the plans for the new science block are being finalised and will be completed by September 2023. We are currently in talks with Suffolk in regard to upgrading the perimeter fencing to ensure that the site is secure. A full external condition survey was completed in January 2022, given the age and life span of the building and it is hoped that a programme of upgrading will be agreed with Suffolk. The plans for the new drop off and car park facilities are nearing completion. The plans for a multi-use games area is still a possibility but will require a strong funding model.

General - After 16 successful years as Principal of Thurston Community College Helen Wilson retired and moved to the West Country. New Principal Nicki Mattin was appointed. She was previously a Principal of an Academy in Kent for 9 years. Trips and outside events have slowly returned, and our Personal Challenge week is back on the calendar for July 2022. Students attended the commonwealth celebration at Westminster Abbey on 14th March 2022.

Our Duke of Edinburgh programme continues to be very popular, and the lead Teacher has been invited to a celebration at Buckingham Palace. There is a planned 'Turin' funded trip to Peru for 6th form students this summer.

We hope to also return to Nepal next summer and are in the process of applying for a Turin Grant. This April will see the return of our Performing Arts Show and the rehearsals for Matilda have gone well. We are also starting to open up the site to outside events and community use. Our new Year 7 numbers for September 2023

were the highest for many years and it is nice that Thurston Community College continues to be well regarded in the local area. Our social media feeds on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are a great place to keep up to date with all the latest news and events.

- vii. Thurston Primary Academy – a written report had been submitted by Mr Bayes, Headteacher in which he drew the meeting’s attention to the following:

It has been an exciting academic year for Thurston CE Primary Academy. With a successful move into the new building and an increase in pupil numbers from 205 to 265 (at time of writing), the school is steadily expanding in all year groups and is continuing to build on our good reputation.

Pupils are enjoying the new curriculum that we can offer due to the facilities that the school now has. The specialist teaching area is being enjoyed by all, with pupils now being given greater opportunities to develop their skills in Design and Technology, Science and Art. Cooking has been a particular favourite for many. With the curriculum being developed into a two-year cycle so that all pupils are taught a wide and balanced curriculum following the National Curriculum. Class teachers and support staff have, over time, used their professional judgement to adjust to the initial approach to delivering specific parts of the curriculum to mixed age range classes. The delivery of the curriculum is continuously reviewed and monitored to ensure pupils have the best learning outcomes.

Throughout the majority of the academic year, Thurston CE Primary Academy has been fortunate enough to remain unaffected by the pandemic. However, a decision to close the school to Key Stage 2 pupils the week before Christmas was made to break the cycle of infection due to the numbers of pupils and staff infected. Pupils were taught remotely. Since returning in January, there have been a small number of pupils who have tested positive, but the numbers are not affecting the organisation of the school day and the way in which pupils are taught.

Now that we are in the Spring term and settled into the new building, more opportunities for after school clubs are on offer for the pupils. These range from sports clubs, language club, writing club, music club and STEM club, all clubs are well attended. Thurston CE Primary Academy is developing its links within the community. This academic year, during Harvest, pupils donated food to the local charity Gate House as well as collecting money for various larger charities such as Young Minds and Children in Need. As the Headteacher, I am very keen that the community uses the school so that everyone can benefit from it, not just the pupils. In the Autumn term, the local Scout group used the car park for Thurston’s Big Weekend, local exercise groups hire out the hall for Yoga and Jazzercise and we are working closely with Reverend Father Ben Edwards to raise money to support the Ukraine appeal and use the school hall to introduce an Open Church. We have been developing links with Thurston library to ensure staff and pupils are making use of this fantastic local resource and working with them and the wider library service to develop our own school library. Our own library is a wonderful space which is enjoyed by pupils; however the book stock and organisation still require a great deal of time-consuming work. As a school, we are aware of the need to hire outdoor space to local sports clubs but require funding to develop an outdoor changing room area with toilets before this can be offered. Our vast outdoor space requires development in order for the pupils to become more active and stimulated during free time. There are plans in place to use the Sports Premium funding to develop the area but, like all funding, it is never enough therefore this will be an ongoing project for the next few years. We have been fortunate that funds from the PTA have been allocated to support a Book Nook for pupils who want to sit in a quiet area outside and read or share books with one another. There are plans in place to make the playground environment more interesting for the pupils, however funding is required for an outdoor classroom, sensory garden and Forest School area. Once this is in place, I would like to invite members of the community to support pupils and introduce a gardening club. Staff at Thurston CE Primary Academy relish the challenges that we face as a growing school and will continue to put the pupils at the heart of everything that they do.

viii. Thurston Relief In Need Charity (TRINC) – the Chair of the Charity had submitted a written report in which he commented that:

Objects of Charity - To make payments to relieve persons resident in the Parish of Thurston who are in need, hardship or distress or to provide items, services or facilities for such.

Grants Made - One grant payment has been made to a resident to assist with the purchase of a special pair of glasses. Another was made to assist with some garden work for a resident following an approach from a third- party carer. The charity obtained a locality grant towards this project and also contributed from its own funds. No emergency payments were made in the last financial year. All requests are considered in complete confidence.

Trustees - The nominative and co-optative trustees are unchanged and have been joined by the Reverend Ben Edwards as the ex-officio member. Ben is now taking an active part in the running of the charity.

Use of Charity's Assets - The major asset of the charity is the area of land to the south of Heath Rd. A decision was taken some time ago to review the use of this land and see if it could be better used. The land has now been taken out of agricultural use and part of it (approx. 3.5 acres) is to be leased to Housing 21 for the construction of an extra -care facility comprising flats and bungalows. The planning application for this scheme was submitted last August but is yet to be determined by the local authority. It was hoped that the outcome would have been known by now, but the latest information that we have is that will not be until the end of April.

It is proposed that the remainder of the land; including the existing small recreation area which is currently let to the Parish Council will be dedicated to some form of communal/village use. It has been expressly stated, on a number of occasions, that it will not be used for open-market housing. The charity will continue to liaise with the Parish Council and once the outcome of the planning application is known these ideas can be further explored. Professional Advisors - The charity continues to use the services of Hazells (Chartered Surveyors) and Greene & Greene (Solicitors). It has also engaged with a ELD (landscape architects).

Future - The charity will continue in its current form and will also review its aims and objectives as the trustees see fit. Any queries - Please direct any queries via email to: thurstoninneedcharity@btinternet.com

ix. Thurston W.I. – the President of the W.I. was invited to submit her report in which the following were covered: the group had been in contact with members throughout Covid and had maintained their numbers. All membership had been renewed in September and the first meeting in March was the soup and chat which was well attended. A reminder that the W.I. was open to all and not just to members and that the group actively participated in village events and collected for Gatehouse. Currently there were 48 members and they met in the Cavendish Hall as they had done for the last 103 years.

10. To receive issues from members of the public present –

- a) Hedge at Pokeridge Corner. The Chair agreed that it should be passed over to SCC Highways once again.
- b) S106 – where is the infrastructure being spent? *The Chair of the Parish Council explained that it was fair to say that Thurston did not get its fair share of the infrastructure improvements for a growing village. Improvements that will come at the end of the five large scale developments will centre on highway issues – crossroads on Station Hill; Pokeridge Corner, Fishwick Corner and Bunbury Arms. If residents are impacted by the works being carried out then the best way to accommodate this is to try and report the issues that arise especially those arising due to the extra traffic works.*

11. As there was no further comments from members of the public in attendance, the Chair closed the meeting at 21.13pm by thanking all for attending.

12. Date of next meeting – to be confirmed but all were made aware that it would need to be between 1st March and 1st June 2023.

So approved and signed by the Chair of the Parish Council (presiding Chair) at the meeting of 16th March 2023.