

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 17th April 2013 at 8.00pm in the Cavendish Hall, Church Road, Thurston, as prepared by the Acting Clerk to the Council.

The Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr S Campbell, took the Chair.

In Attendance : Parish Cllrs. C Dashper, R Fawcett, Mrs A O'Connell, B Rainbow, Mrs J Service, M Thomas, Kathryn Savage, Parish Clerk; County Cllr Penny Otton; PC Annelly Miles; Rev'd Gates; Roger Ling, New Green Trust; Brain Pettitt and Neil Paxman, Salmon Trust; Penny Kelly, Cavendish Hall; Steve Taylor, Thurston Scouts; Gill Flower, Thurston WI and thirteen members of the public.

1. Opening and Welcome -

The meeting was declared open at 8.00pm.

2. Apologies for Absence – Cllr P Robinson

3. Minutes of APM 11th April 2012 – These having been previously circulated were unanimously approved as a true record of the meeting.

4. Chairman's Report – *a full copy of this report is available from the Clerk to the Council.*

The Chairman delivered a report outlining the Council's achievements during the past year, and the plans for the year to come. He thanked Cllrs. Sarah Bullen and Lisa Couper who had stepped down since the last Annual Parish Meeting and welcomed Cllrs. Robert Alston, Anne O'Connell and Mike Thomas to the Council. There was still a vacancy on the Parish Council which it was hoped would be filled shortly. Thanks were also offered to Vice-Chair Cllr. Robinson who has chaired two TPC Meetings when he was unable to attend. Of particular note were: match funding for half the salary of Thurston's very own Police Community Support Officer who was in attendance tonight; information on the organisations that had been supported during the financial year just ended; explanation on the decision to keep the proposed spend for the coming year at the same level as the previous year and the changes in Council Tax Benefit and the number of planning applications that have passed before the Parish Council. Of the objectives mentioned at the previous Annual Parish Meeting he confirmed that the lease negotiations for the Pre School were almost at an end; that costs relating to rubbish collection in the village had been reduced; that some street light had been upgraded to save ongoing electricity costs and that work had begun on the Neighbourhood Plan for Thurston. He continued by outlining the 3 biggest objectives for the coming year: completion of the lease agreement with SCC and Thurston Preschool; upgrading of the Thurston Village Website and to get started on a project spanning approximately 2 years to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Thurston. He made the meeting aware that there would be a Public Meeting on May 16 at the New Green Centre to publicise the latter.

5. Report from County Cllr Mrs P Otton – *a full copy of this report is available from the Clerk to the Council*

Cllr Mrs Otton reported on SCC's new initiative for education - 'Raising the Bar' - which was hoped to improve the situation with regards to the County's poor success in the league tables; closure of Beyton Middle School; nil increase to the County Council's portion of the Council Tax; introduction of a smart card for young people for travel; repairs to the A14 slip road; road safety measures; new contract for the provision of highway maintenance and services and pothole and damage to the roads. She was pleased to see the success of the Library; the new Baby Café in New Green Centre and to have been able to support the bids from her Locality Budget for the Jubilee Celebrations; redevelopment of New Green and new equipment for Cavendish Hall.

6. Report from District Cllr D Haley & Mrs Powell – No report had been forthcoming.

7. Police Report - *A full copy of this report is attached to the file copy of these minutes.*

PC Annelly Miles reported that there had been 62 crimes between April 2012 and March 2013, which was 16 less than in the previous year. 21 arrests / resolutions had been made in connection with these offences with one case still ongoing. A breakdown of the crimes included thefts; fraud by false representation; criminal damage; burglaries; assaults; drink drive offences; drug offences. In total there had been 282 calls made to Suffolk Police over

the last year regarding incidents in and around Thurston. MSDC had overall seen a crime decrease of 5.9% over the previous 12 months, the total number of crimes across the district being 1,098. PC Miles informed the meeting of changes in personnel within the SNT, and thanked the Parish Council for their help and support throughout the past year.

8. Reports from Parish Council Representatives -

a) Recreation Ground Trust – Cllr Dashper, Chair of this Board, reported that following the floods of the previous year, and the subsequent refurbishment, the focus this year had been to maximise use of the facilities. He also noted the ongoing problem of dog faeces on the recreation ground, which was becoming a major problem, especially as the pupils of the Primary School use the Ground as their playground. Cllr Dashper reminded residents that all dogs should be kept on a lead, and that all dog litter should be picked up and disposed of in any litter bin around the village. *A full copy of this report is attached to the file copy of these minutes.*

b) Library – Cllr Fawcett reported that Thurston Community Library was a joint use library located at Thurston Community College and that the Parish Council pays over £2000, on behalf of the village to open the library at weekends. A Thurston Library Working Group was set up in April 2011 and has: enabled the library to become a member of Suffolk Libraries; applied for and received a grant to trial ereaders; with the help of the Thurst Café set up a stock of books in Thurst which can be borrowed from there; set up free wifi in the library; promoted the use of volunteers in the library; planned to raise a contribution of £1900 over a period of 20 months to help sustain the library service in its present form. Plans to raise the money included: book sales; visit to places of interest; a particular event to be held in April 2014; donations. The group was very grateful for the support of everyone involved in the library. *A full copy of this report is attached to the file copy of these minutes.*

c) Footpaths – Cllr Mrs Service, as the Council's Footpath Officer reported that all the Parish's footpaths were walked regularly and all appeared passable. The meeting was reminded that either she or the Clerk could be contacted should there be anything amiss with the footpaths. A request was issued for walkers to pick up dog litter.

d) Thurston Relief in Need Charity - Cllr Mrs Service reported that the charity was funded by investments, and renting out land in its ownership. There were currently 5 trustees and the aim of the Charity was to make payments to those in hardship or need. During the previous year payments totalling £2680 had been made. Income was derived from land that was rented out and recycling credits from the recycling bins on the granary site. The meeting noted the appointment of Officers of the Charity.

THERE FOLLOWED A SHORT INTERVAL DURING WHICH THE LADIES OF THURSTON EVENING WOMEN'S INSTITUTE SERVED REFRESHMENTS

9. Reports from Village Organisations

a) New Green Centre - Mr Roger Ling, Trustee of the New Green Community Trust, reported that it had been a very busy year for the trustees which were currently 7 in number from a total requirement of 12. The Centre was well-used by residents of all ages. Mrs Barbara Morris continued to maintain the Conservation Area although there was a dog problem. The grant from the Parish Council had been reduced which went towards ground maintenance. The bowls club had folded and it was hoped that an alternative hirer would come forth for the area. Most rooms / halls were well used day and evening and the number of hirers was remaining steady. Work would soon begin on the new Parish Council Office and Meeting Room. The Great Barton Free Church was still involved. The next phase of refurbishment (the Centre was 23 years old) would cover the kitchen, toilets and corridor. Several fundraising events were planned for the coming year.

b) Salmon Trust – Mr Brian Pettit reported that there were 5 trustees and 20 members and that premises were still an issue as they needed to rethink their plans as **Thurston Rugby Club** had asked them to leave. There were currently 45/50 cadets in the current building. The only fundraiser that had taken place was the Thurffest. Mr Neil Paxman reported that there had been some problems with staging the Thurffest this year and that there would not be any events taking place on the Sunday.

On the Saturday there would be a Youth Talent and Proms Concert. A Partnership with EACH and St Nicolas Hospice had been arranged which it was hoped would lead to sponsorship. An

update regarding the ATC Squadron was provided. Thanks were also offered to the Parish Council for its donation to 2 cadets' trip to Canada.

c) Rev'd Alan Gates - The Rev'd reported that the previous year the two parishes of Great Barton and Thurston had come together informally and that in December 2012 Great Barton and Thurston had become a United Benefice. Traditional services remained the same with some new ones and the two parishes now had joint events and fundraising activities. He mentioned that he partook in assemblies at both Primary Schools and congratulation the Primary School in Thurston on its recent Ofsted Inspection. St Peter's was undergoing a sort out and the PCC was considering the way forward. His main objective was to make the church available to children and young people. St Peter's church is everyone's Parish church, and belonged to the whole community. He mentioned that it cost £1,000 a week to keep St Peter's open.

d) Cavendish Hall - Mrs Penny Kelly reported that there were a number of concerns with the fabric of the building in particular the end wall needed refurbishing. Within 6-12 months the hall would need a new hirer if planning permission was granted for the new stand-alone building for the Thurston Under Fives Playgroup. Thanks were offered to Penny Otton for funding from her locality budget for new tables. The usage of the hall had dwindled which had meant a loss of revenue. Thanks were also offered to the team who helped to clear up and look after the Hall.

e) 1st Thurston Scouts - Mr Steve Taylor reported that the troop was the largest in the District and County, with 82 members between the ages of 6 and 14 which provided activities for 50 weeks a year. The membership could grow but there was a lack of adults to run sessions. Everyone on the waiting list would eventually be offered a place. Most of the previous year had been spent dealing with a new management structure and the new Chairman had helped achieve this. Mr. Fawcett was confirmed as the new Chairman and the AGM would be at the end of May.

f) Women's Institute - Mrs Gill Flower reported that the Thurston Evening WI would be 95 years old the following year and had always met in the Cavendish Hall. There were 45 members who met on a monthly basis and had enjoyed talks from guest speakers, an outing in July and keep-fit sessions. The group had also made bunting for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and had given a donation to the Library.

g) Methodist Church - Mrs Gill Flower delivered apologies from the Rev'd Hufton. Meeting were held on Sundays 2.45pm, and with half of the service being conducted by local people and the rest by visiting preachers.

10. **Any other business** - There was none

11. The Chairman having thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and the WI for providing refreshments, and there being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 9.42pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....