

THORNHACKETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 20th March 2024

Attendees: Cllr B Taylor-Wade (Chairman), Cllr S Hillier (Vice Chairman), Cllr J Parker, Cllr J Rogers, Cllr. J Axten, Cllr A Bromell, Cllr R Baxter, Cllr N Whitsun-Jones.

Also in Attendance: Mrs S Hillier (Clerk). Cllr Legg (Dorset Councillor) I Young (Council Environment Rep).

1. **Opening Remarks** – The Chairman welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the meeting and thank those who had attended the Sustainable Thornford meeting the previous evening.
2. **Apologies and declarations of interest** – Cllr Parker, Cllr B Lewis. There were no declarations of interest at this point.
3. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 17th January had been circulated. Cllr Whitsun-Jones stated that he declaration of interest had been personal and not prejudicial. Acceptance subject to this change was proposed by Cllr Rogers, Seconded Cllr Hillier – **agreed**.
4. **Matters Arising – a) D Day Celebrations** – Cllr Whitsun-Jones noted that there had been a poor response to help and it was suggested that the event be combined with the Thornford Fete on 1st June. Local residents were asked their views and they indicated that they were keen to keep the date and were willing to help. Cllr Hillier said that the designated dates were from 6th June to 9th June by the Royal British Legion and could not support an earlier date. The Hall was booked, the WI had agreed to help provide cakes. It was **agreed** to keep to the original date.

b) **Speed Indicator Device** – It was agreed to contact Dorset Council and request a meeting with the SID team with a view to speed surveys at each end of Thornford village. Cllr Baxter agreed to be the Council lead on this. Proposed Cllr Hillier, seconded Cllr Rogers. **Agreed unanimously**. Other suggestions were made regarding the perceived problems, such as moving the 30mph sign, moving the 40mph sign, rumble strips, road narrowing. Applying for 20mph zone. It was decided to wait until we had spoken to the SIDs team and received the results of the speed survey before looking at other measures.

c) **Hyper Acute Stroke Unit** – There had been wide spread press coverage of the meeting and the proposed closure, Cllr Whitsun-Jones had written to the Secretary of State on behalf of the Council requesting a call in of the decision. Cllr Baxter had attended a public meeting at Westlands which was strongly against closure and local residents were not happy that Somerset Council had given money to Dorchester Hospital for the development their of a new unit.

5. **Public Forum** – No further progress on the possible footpath extension to Lake. A complaint was raised regarding potholes and broken tarmac and collapsing verges due to heavy tractors going off the edge of the road. It was suggested that possibly a farmer to farmer approach may be useful.. The survey of the Halt had been extended – as many people as possible were urged to go on line and answer the questions. Council employees had attended to replace the Grange Park sign and a local resident had prevented this happening. As it was his land . Cllr Legg to pursue as where the sign was to be placed was designated Highways land on the maps.

Cllr Legg noted that Lloyds Bank in Sherborne was due to close in January 2025. There was the possibility of a desk in the Post Office. The Dancing Hill road improvements were due to start later in April. These included changing the sight lines at the junction and altering the speed limit to 30mph further up the road towards The Terrace.

6. **Planning Matters – a) P/HOU/2024/00908** - Higher Farm Cottage Beer Hackett Road Beer Hackett Dorset DT9 6QT - Erect garage extension to provide additional ancillary accommodation (demolish existing garden store) This application had come in after the Agenda had been published and had been circulated

to Councillors. There did not seem to be any issue, the garden shed would be demolished and the boundary changed. It could not be sold on as a dwelling as there was only a shower room and bedroom.

b) P/FUL/2024/00691 -Land North Of Pound Road Thornford - Retain 2no. turning heads at the Wingfield Place development – There did not appear to be a problem with this proposal, the turning heads are there already.

7. **Elections** – Parish Council elections were taking place on May 2nd along with those for Dorset Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner. There were 8 Councillors for Thornford and 2 for Beer Hackett. Residents were urged to stand for election. The Clerk would be taking papers into the Council Offices on 11th April.

8. **Wingfield Place** – Discussion was deferred to later in the meeting

9. **Avenue of Trees** – Cllr Bromell indicated that the Green Action Plan had shown a considerable interest in hedgerows, trees etc. There had been some talks with Highways who indicated that they would need to be insured and maintained. The landowner may also need to be consulted. Cllr Hillier suggested that this be deferred for further investigation as we had just set our Budget and had tried to keep the Precept as low as possible and there was little spare monies for maintenance, insurance etc. at this time. This was agreed.

10. **Social Media and Publicity** – Cllr Whitsun-Jones asked how much was the website used. Many events were on Thornford Now Facebook page, perhaps we ought to have a Facebook/Instagram page. Publicity was an issue. Many advertised on telegraph poles etc. The Council could not do this. Cllr Hillier suggested setting up a working group to investigate what is possible. Cllr Hillier, Cllr Whitsun-Jones, Cllr Bromell and Cllr Rogers agreed to be on the working group. Cllr Whitsun-Jones was thanked for his work on contacting the media regarding the Extra Ordinary Meeting.

11. **Finance Report** – a) Invoices were presented for approval **agreed** – There had been a refund of £383 from Castle Estates due to overpayment of rent (Standing Order and cheque – the standing order was not known about hence the double payment). The Clerk requested permission to pay the Hall hire for the Sustainable Thornford Public Meeting - **this was agreed**. The Clerk requested permission to approach Lloyds Bank with a view to i) opening a Deposit Account ii) Signing up to Internet Banking iii) Obtaining a Debit Card. These would require changes to our financial regulations. It was agreed that Cllr Hillier and Cllr Rogers would attend the Bank with the Clerk to sign up to these facilities. Proposed Cllr Hillier Seconded Cllr Taylor-Wade. There were no requests for funding

b) Papers relating to progress on the 2023-2024 Budget were presented. It appears that there may be a slight overspend mainly owing to increases in electricity prices and increases in the salary bill. This was also noted.

c) The External Auditors report was also noted.

At this point **Item 8 Wingfield Place** was discussed – presented by Cllr Whitsun-Jones. The green space at Wingfield Place was to be held for public use in perpetuity. It would either be offered to the Council or managed by agents of Wyatt Homes. It had not been offered to the Parish Council. Cllr Legg indicated that it had been offered to Dorset but not accepted. Cllr Hillier noted that at this time, in 2019, Dorset was in the process of trying to unify and migrate 5 different planning systems. The estate is at present subject to planning enforcement action. The site could be a useful asset, but there was the ongoing cost of insurance and maintenance if the Parish Council were to be offered it.

12. **Environment and Climate Champion** – I Young. Mr Young circulated a report to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was suggested that a Sub-committee be set up to look at how the Council can encourage Environmental change e.g. looking at possible sites for an EV charging point with the assistance of Dorset Council Charging Ahead programme and a grant from Volitalia. Cllr Bromell and Cllr Baxter, Cllr Hillier and Cllr Whitsun-Jones expressed an interest in setting up a working group. The Village Hall were

interested in an EV point on their land. There had been a Sustainable Thornford meeting on 19th March where results of the survey were discussed. There had been 124 responses. Areas of concern were speeding and 20mph limit, wild life and habitat, flooding, village hall solar panels. The school had also been engaged in the discussions and their priorities included amongst other things, recycling, litter. Cllr Hillier thanked Mr Young for his work and that of Sustainable Thornford towards the Green Action Plan and in particular in engaging the school in the discussion. It was suggested that the Environment Agency be invited to a future meeting of the Parish Council

- 13. Correspondence** - a) Request to borrow the marquee – agreed that a £100 returnable deposit against damage was proposed Cllr Hillier, seconded Cllr Rogers **agreed unanimously**.
b) Hire of Village Hall for Rev. Gilbert leaving. Suggested a grant application be submitted to cover part.
c) Agreed to investigate power washing play equipment.
DAPTC newsletter circulated to Councillors.

Date of Annual Parish Council Meeting – 15th May 2024 at 7.00pm Thornford Village Hall followed by an Ordinary Council meeting