THORNHACKETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16th September 2026 at 7.00pm in Thornford Village Hall

Attendees: Cllrs. Hillier (Chairman), Hoff, Baxter, Bromell, Thompson, Keene, Robins, Small.

Also in Attendance: Mrs S Hillier (Clerk), and 6 members of the Public.

1. **Welcome** to members and to members of the public,
2. **Apologies for Absence** - these were received from, Cllr R Legg and Ian Young (Environment Champion) agreed and accepted.
3. **Declarations Of Interest:** Cllr Hillier declared a pecuniary interest on an item in Item 7c salary increase
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2026 –** these had been circulated. The acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Cllr Hillier, seconded Cllr Hoff, – **agreed unanimously.**
5. **Matters Arising –** a) **Blackberry Solar Farm** – Nothing to report. b) The remains of the mile marker to the east of Thornford is overgrown- The Chairman indicated that a strimmer could be used to cut it back. Is the stone to be replaced that was removed by Dorset Council – Clerk to investigate
6. **Public Forum** – a). Could something be done about the dog mess being left in the allotments, recreation field and on the pavements. Investigate signage. The Clerk would contact the dog warden and ask for advice. b) The accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting were questioned as some comments were not included. This was noted. Points were raised regarding the 20mph speed limit, this is to be discussed later on the Agenda

> Minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, they should give an indication of the topic being discussed and any outcomes or decisions made. Minutes should be as brief as possible and just convey the sense of the discussion. They should not contain names of specific contributors other than any proposer and seconder. Clerk's Handbook

7. **Financials** – **a) Income and expenditure** – **Income** received included the rent for the Allotments of £850.00 which had been paid into the deposit account. All minuted **expenditure** had been paid except for the Fower Festival amount as the Clerk is awaiting banking details. The invoices to SSE for £63.32, Grass cutting August for £101.70, Scribe accounts package for £37.20 and Play Inspection Company for £115.80 had also been paid as all contracted items Acceptance was proposed by Cllr Hillier, seconded Cllr Bromell – **agreed.** SSE contract for 2026-2027 had been renewed.

   b) Future Expenditure – A schedule of payments had been circulated to Councillors, and appended to these minutes. The schedule included exceptional payments for Village Hall hire £105.00, Rent for the Recreation Field - £1260.00, Grass cutting - £101.70, SSE - £66.09, Office 365 - £89.99 Salary Month 6, a payment Quarter 2 to HMRC PAYE, Bembury Lane Bench £60.71. Total future payments came to £2789.50

   c) Salary Increase – The Local Government Association has negotiated an increase of 3.3% backdated to 1st April 2026 to run to 31st March 2027 This is within Budget. A paper was presented to Councillors showing the impact on the salary payments. September salary payment to include backdated amount. It was **agreed that this increase be made** Proposed Cllr Hoff, seconded Cllr Robins carried with one abstention

   d) Thornford Clock – a proposal had been received for installing an auto winder for the clock, in addition an electrician would be required and scaffolding to the tower during the installation period. The proposal included an invoice for £540.00 for investigative works by Smiths of Derby which would come off the installation bill if the proposal was accepted. Following some discussion it was agreed that the costs did not seem to offer good value for money It was proposed by Cllr Robins, seconded by Cllr Small that proposal from Smiths of Derby be rejected – **agreed unanimously.** Instead it was **agreed** that an advertisement be placed to see if a team of volunteers to wind the clock as previously could be enlisted to wind the clock.
8. **Speed Limits – a) Beer Hackett** – the speed limit application has been accepted by Dorset Council with

the support of the ward councillor and is listed in Phase 5 for 2027.

b) Thornford – The Chairman indicated that there had not been a formal proposal or agreement by the Council to commit to requesting the implementation of a 20mph scheme in Thornford. Cllr Robins had prepared a paper summarising the position to date which included other traffic calming measures that had not been discussed previously. The Chairman suggested a proposal stating

'That this Council:

1 expresses its willingness to consider the implementation of a 20mph speed zone within the village of Thornford

2. undertakes to consult the residents of Thornford both online and in paper between and including 1st November and 30th November 2026 with two options

i. a 20mph zone in the centre of the village between Boot Lane and Kings Road including adjoining roads within that area, and

ii. a 20mph zone between the village signs at either end of the village '

Following discussion Cllr Bromell proposed that there should be a third option of - 'Do not introduce a 20mph zone at all' – seconded Cllr Hoff - **agreed.** Cllr Baxter proposed a fourth option – 'That the 20mph zone be between the village sign at the western end of the village and the 40mph sign at the eastern end." Proposed seconded Cllr Robins **6 in favour 2 against agreed.**

At this point it was proposed that the meeting be suspended to allow a member of the public to speak – **agreed.** The member of the public indicated that there was no need for any options as the Sustainable Thornford survey would suffice. It was pointed out that democratically, options should be offered. The Council meeting came back into session and the new substantive proposal was voted on –

'That this Council:

1 expresses its willingness to consider the implementation of a 20mph speed zone within the village of Thornford

2. undertakes to consult the residents of Thornford both online and in paper between and including 1st November and 30th November 2026 with the following options

i. a 20mph zone in the centre of the village between Boot Lane and Kings Road including adjoining roads within that area,

ii. a 20mph zone between the village signs at either end of the village '

iii) a 20mph zone between the village sign at the western end of the village to the 40mph sign at the eastern end,

iv) Do not implement a change to the existing speed limits.

Proposed Cllr Hillier, seconded Cllr Baxter – **carried unanimously**

A financial contribution would be expected once implemented.

8. **Local Plan Update –** A paper was presented for information indicating the reasons for and timetable for the development of a new Dorset Local Plan. Council will have another consultation opportunity when Dorset has revised its draft. Agreed no formal response at this stage, members could consult individually if they wished. A paper summarising the major changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was also presented for information.
9. **Rights of Way Consultation –** There were no submissions from Cllr Bromell or Cllr Keene
10. **Proposed Ward Boundary Changes for Dorset –** a paper was presented summarising proposed changes for Thornhackett Parish Council area, it would not affect service provision and was a political redrawing of some boundaries. It was **agreed not to make any formal response.** Councillors could respond individually if they so wished.
11. **Environment Champions Report –** Cllr Robins summarised the report – Sustainable Thornford were congratulated for their meeting regarding solar panel provision which was well attended and some attendees were pursuing the project. Climate records indicated summer 2026 hottest on record. This would have an effect on harvests. Sustainable Thornford were also interested in planting 30 trees from the village boundary towards the station, Highways approved in principle, the Clerk flagged long-term

maintenance liability needed clarification before proceeding, the Parish Council at this stage could not accept financial responsibility for their maintenance.. The full report is on the Parish web site for anybody to read. Wessex Water leak in Beer Hackett had been repaired.

12. **Reports from Working Groups - EWG –** Held a meeting on 1st September, they requested a letter to Wessex Water regarding their Water Aid scheme. The group had reviewed the Biodiversity Policy actions and were recommending the Policy be adopted by Council. The ward Councillor had indicated a willingness to meet with residents regarding Flooding issues and that he be invited to hold a meeting. **Play Area Group –** they had held a meeting and a parent was going to talk to mothers to obtain their views on the proposals received. Quotations were also being investigated for improving the pathway down to the Play area to make it more accessible. This may impact what could be spent on equipment. **Audit and Risk group –** There was a vacancy on the group and Cllr Robins expressed a willingness to join the group, this was accepted. The next steps were to look at a timetable for meetings.
13. **Reports from Councillors with responsibilities –** Cllr Thompson was submitting content for Contact Cllr Bromell reported that the two dead cherry trees had been removed. Rights of Way consultation had not been reviewed by representatives. Clerk to respond.
14. **Planning Applications** – There were no new applications submitted but there were two applications that could affect Thornhackett Although not statutory consultees there had been a submission objecting to the development at Folly Fields Farm on grounds of Highways safety due to poor sight lines and increased risk of flooding. Although not statutory consultees the Parish Council had also submitted objections to the proposed development for 380 houses at the bottom of Babylon Hill on the grounds of increased traffic and how this could impact on the neighbouring villages and increased possibility of flooding affecting areas upstream like Thornford.
15. **Communications –** Road closure for 5 weeks, 24 hours a day through Beer Hackett. A thank you letter from St Michaels had been received for the donation towards the grass mower and also from Thornford Primary School for the donation towards the replacement shed.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 21st October 2026 7.00pm in Thornford Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed: **Date:**

DRAFT