

THORNHACKETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 18th March 2026 at 7.00pm in Thornford Village Hall

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

Also in Attendance: Dorset Cllr Legg, Mrs S Hillier (Clerk), and 10 members of the Public.

1. **Welcome** to members of the public, Wessex Internet would not be attending due to ill health, they will attend a future meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence** - these were received from, Cllr Small and agreed and accepted
3. **Declarations Of Interest:** . None were declared.
4. **Minutes of the meeting held on 18th February 2026** – these had been circulated. The acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Cllr Hillier, seconded by Cllr Bromell – **agreed unanimously**,
5. **Matters Arising** – a) **Blackberry Solar Farm** – Nothing to report. b) The 30mph request had been submitted to Dorset Council.
6. **Public Forum** = The street light at the end of Waldrons was flashing on and off, it was explained that they were all going to be replaced. There is a blocked drain outside 40/41 Waldrons. It was noted that Pound Road/Longford had been swept but not the side roads. How much CIL is left, it was explained that the majority was now earmarked for work in the Play Area and the new street lights.
7. **Finances** – a) Income and Expenditure this paper had been circulated.
 - b) The Clerk noted that the grass cutting seemed to be more but the price quoted here included VAT which could be reclaimed. Also the swings had now been repaired. The grass/hedge cut at St Michaels had been agreed some months ago. The donation in the memory of Cyril Taylor had been increased to £30 as there were two charities and £12.50 seemed parsimonious and so Officers agreed to increase to £30. Acceptance of the expenditure was proposed by Cllr Hillier, seconded by Cllr Hoff **agreed unanimously**.
 - c) Thornford Clock – The clock was being wound but the winder wanted to remain anonymous, Smiths of Derby have been contacted and are going to survey the tower prior to fitting the autowinder.
 - d) Playground Inspection Contract Three quotes had been obtained, cheapest was Playground Inspection Company and this would be enhanced by two inspections in the year by Southern Playground Services who would check all fixings and springs etc twice a year. Acceptance of the proposal was proposed by Cllr Baxter, seconded Cllr Hoff – **agreed unanimously**
 - e) Grass Cutting Contract – The Clerk had tried 5 companies and only received a formal quotation from one. This company was charging £1 a cut more than our previous contractor and was going to undertake 18 cuts a year, the contract sum would be divided equally into 12 months. Cllr Hillier proposed and Cllr Robins seconded the proposal that we accept this contract as the grass was starting to grow and the rate per cut was comparable to the previous contractor – **agreed unanimously**.
 - f) Annual Appraisal – The Clerk had not received an appraisal and one was overdue owing to conflict of interest Cllr Hoff (Audit & Risk) agreed to Chair the process along with two other Councillors.
8. **DAPTC Statement of Reasonable Expectations** – a paper had been circulated, this paper outlined how Dorset Council and the Town and Parish Councils under the umbrella of DAPTC would work together. Including regular information sessions. Councillors agreed that the paper seemed reasonable and had no comment to make.

9. Petition The petition calls upon Thornhackett Parish Council to: Recognise the growing public concern regarding untreated sewage discharges affecting the River Wriggle and local roads. Formally raise these concerns with Wessex Water, the Environment Agency and the local Member of Parliament. Support calls for urgent investigation and infrastructure improvements to prevent sewage discharges into the river system and onto public highways. Support independent monitoring and transparency of water quality within the River Wriggle catchment. The River Wriggle forms part of a wider catchment system flowing into the River Yeo, then the River Parrett and ultimately Bridgwater Bay. Pollution at source therefore affects communities well beyond the immediate parish area. Received from Paul Hollick, Yetminster resident

Mr Hollick presented the petition and explained the background to it. Councillors agreed to accept the petition and the Clerk was asked to write to: i) Wessex Water explaining that Thornhackett was in support of the petition, ii) Contact other Parish Councils and Sherborne Town Council in the catchment area urging them to support the petition iii) Write to the Planning Authority regarding the increased use of SUDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) in new developments.

It was noted by a member of the public that the attenuation pond on the Wingfield Estate does not seem to be working, but the developer needs to sign it off before Wessex Water will adopt it.

10. Reports from Councillors – Play Area needs to set up a Working Group to consider contracts and equipment to be installed. Three companies had visited the site, to date one quotation has been received. Cllr Hillier and Cllr Bromell plus two members of the public (parents/carers)

Footpaths – Cllr Bromell agreed to be the contact for reporting problems with footpaths and reporting on to the Ranger. She would work with Cllr Baxter who was looking at stiles and gates.

11. Planning Applications – new, in progress and finalised. No new applications other than a variation in conditions on the Grange Park application and the pollarding of the Lime Tree had been advertised as it has a TPO (Tree Preservation Order)

12. Environment Champion Report – A paper had been circulated and was on the web site. Discussion time was limited. Ian Young suggested establishing a Solar Purchasing Scheme was suggested in order to obtain bulk discounts on solar panel purchases. It was agreed to facilitate a community meeting to discuss this by paying for the hall rental.

13. Communications – The February Police report had been received, it reported that there had been a van theft, an attempted shed break in and a residential burglary. Residents are urged to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the police. An e-mail had been received from Mat at the Kings Arms regarding the street light contract, he favoured heritage lights and memorial plaques as they are the village war memorial, he was willing to help fund raise for any extra costs that this may incur, it was agreed that this was a good idea and should be pursued. The Clerk was asked to write to the companies to see if they were interested in upgrading the project and re-quoting.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

- **Date of next meeting is April 15th and will be the Annual Thornford Parish Meeting at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.**
- **The next Council meeting is May 20th which is the Annual Meeting at 7.00pm in the Village Hall followed by an Ordinary Council meeting.**

