

## THORNHACKETT PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**Attendees:** 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). I Young (Council Environment Rep).

**Opening Remarks** – Cllr Hillier took the Chair in the absence of the Chairman and welcomed Councillors to the meeting on a very cold evening.

**Apologies and declarations of interest** – Cllr B Taylor Wade, Cllr B Lewis. Cllr Whitsun-Jones declared a general interest in the planning application in item 6.

**Minutes** of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November had been circulated acceptance proposed by Cllr Rogers, Seconded Cllr Parker – **agreed**.

**Matters Arising – a)** Thornford Halt – Cllr Parker stated that the next stage was probably a public meeting to which interested parties would be invited which he was happy to organise. Cllr Parker stated that he was standing down from the Council at the elections in May but was happy to continue to help with the project.

**b) Proposed footpath to Lake** – no information available as yet.

**c) D Day Celebrations** – (9<sup>th</sup> June Part in the Park) The Hall had been booked and cakes arranged. Councillors were requested to obtain definite promises of items for a display (poster in noticeboards to be organised) Cllr Parker to arrange for something in Wriggle Magazine, Cllr Whitsun-Jones to use Facebook Page, Clerk to notify Contact magazine. Councillors decided not to purchase a 'Lamp of Peace' from RBL as Cllr Baxter had a hurricane lamp that could be used.

**d) Speed Indicator Device** – The Clerk reported that the purchase of a device, installation and surveys would probably cost in the region of £4k. It was decided to proceed with two speed surveys, one each end of the village, prior to proceeding with the purchase, at a cost of approximately £475. Proposed Cllr Axten. Seconded Cllr Bromell – **carried unanimously**

**Public Forum** – There were no members of the public present.

### Planning Matters –

- a) P/TRT/2023/07059 – St Mary Magdelene Church – T1 Hawthorn, T2 & T3 Yew – Fell. New application by the Church **No decision**
- b) P/FUL/2023/05125 – Bembury Field, Bembury Lane – Erect 1.No. Self-build dwelling and Garage Carry out associated landscape works. **No decision**
- c) P/PABA/2023/06601 Higher Farm Cottage Beer Hackett –Erection of agricultural dung store -**Prior permission not required.**
- d) P/TRT/2024/00235 Woodbury, Pound Road , Thornford – Fell Acacia Tree – this was a late application and Councillors agreed to include it. **There were no objections.**

**Finance Report** – a) Invoices for payment were presented and agreed. It was noted that the electricity contract was up for renewal and costs looked little different from last year, It was also noted that the rent from the Recreation Ground had also risen by 21%.

b) Papers relating to progress on the 2023-2024 Budget was also noted.

**Budget 2024-2025** - Papers were circulated relating to the Budget for 2024-25. The majority of items were showing a cost of living increase, many of which had already been confirmed. The budget also included a request for some street signs. The Budget indicated a requirement of £15143.00 to cover anticipated costs. Acceptance of the Budget was proposed by Cllr Bromell, seconded by Cllr Rogers – **carried unanimously**.

There followed a discussion regarding the Cricket Club rent. There had not been an increase in rent for a number of years. It was agreed that we could not continue to absorb the increase in rent for the Recreation Field. The present rent represents 6.7% of the rent the Council pays. It was agreed to raise the Cricket Club in line to £84 representing 6.66% of the rent the Council has to pay. Proposed Cllr Whitsun-Jones, seconded Cllr Bromell -**carried unanimously**.

The Allotment Rent had also been increased but this is passed on in full to the Allotment Association, an increase of £140. Cllrs Hillier and Baxter declared an interest at this point as Allotment holders.

**Precept 2024-25** - The number of Band D equivalent properties has risen by 1 to 413.1 which if the precept remained unchanged would realise £14847.80. In the light of the agreed Budget various scenarios were discussed. It was agreed that in the light of the present rate of inflation and its affect on our Budget the Precept should rise in line with inflation by 4% to £15442.67 representing approx. 14p/ household/month on a Band D property for 10 months. Proposed Cllr Baxter. Seconded Cllr Parker – **Carried**.

**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 eg looking at possible sites for an EV charging point with the assistance of Dorset Council Charging Ahead programme and a grant from Voltalia. Cllr Bromell and Cllr Baxter expressed an interest. Clerk to look at this proposal for the next meeting. An informal working group could be set up in the meantime.

Green Action Team have produced a questionnaire for return by 23<sup>rd</sup> February – it will be in contact and on line. A summary of results will be available at the March Meeting and could be used to form the basis of a plan. It is hoped to have a meeting in the Village Hall for results to be fed back to local residents. Mr Young requested that the Environmental Champion reports be put on the web site.

The Community Tree Fund had been launched. Parish to respond for tree along hedge-line by Recreation Ground.

Cleaner River Community Trust and Nature Watch from Queens Thorne were suggested as groups who could be invited to a meeting.

**Plus Bus-** Cllr Hillier reported on a meeting held by Yetminster Parish council with Tim Christian the General Manager of a charity called Plus Bus. He outlined several options, they operate minibuses across Dorset. They can be made wheelchair accessible. At present they have 18 services that operate between school times. Journeys are £8 for a return fare and bus passes are accepted. They could possibly offer 9.30 – 2.00pm. A start up grant from Dorset Council could be applied for and buses cost £120/day. It was suggested that a joint meeting with Bradford Abbas Parish Council would be useful and invite Mr Christian to address the meeting.

**Parish Meetings** should be held by the time of the elections. Coffee and biscuits offered.

**Correspondence** - Election Packs now available with nomination papers.

Train closure due to industrial action dates

GSL events would like to hire the field for a family event in July – letter circulated to Councillors.

New Public Space Protection Order has been signed. Training available from Dorset Council for anybody wishing to become an authorised officer.

**Date of next Ordinary Parish Council Meeting – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.00pm Thornford Village Hall**

