

THORNAGE PARISH COUNCIL

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The minutes of the Thornage Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 24th January 2023 at 7.00pm at All Saint's Church, Thornage.

Present: Cllrs Dan Earp (Chairman), Teresa Anderson, Peter Hammond, Dany Pearce, John Pugh-Smith and Paul Hendrick, Kerry Harris (Clerk), NNDC Cllr Andrew Brown, and 5 residents.

1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. He explained to all present that due to the extreme temperatures at the moment, the agenda had been re-ordered to ensure that priority items were covered.

2. To consider Apologies for absence.

Apologies were accepted by all for Cllr John Garner. NCC Cllr Michael Dalby had sent his apologies.

3. To receive Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda and to consider any requests for dispensations

Cllr Pugh-Smith declared an interest in Item 11.2 and was unanimously granted a dispensation to speak.

4. To Approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th December 2022

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2022 were unanimously approved on a Proposal by Cllr Anderson and Seconded by Cllr Hammond.

5. Matters Arising

There were none.

6. Open Forum for Public Participation

Report from NCC Cllr Dalby

Cllr Dalby had sent a report circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting:

Housing with care flats helping people leave hospital - 10 Housing with Care flats across Norfolk are being used to support people who are medically fit but need care at home to leave hospital. People will temporarily move to one from a hospital bed for up to four weeks. They will receive 24/7 care and support before moving back to their home. The flats will be available until 31st March; Cabinet considers next phase of support for Ukrainians in Norfolk - NCC will consider the next step in the Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme, known as the Move On programme: NCC will continue to provide support, both directly and through its partners and district and borough councils, to both hosts and guests. The new package from central Government provides funding to support Ukrainian guests to move into their own homes and for housing authorities to purchase properties for the use of refugees. Norfolk residents to benefit from £2 bus fare cap - 9 bus operators in Norfolk have announced that they will be taking part in the Bus Fare Cap Grant scheme.

There were no comments.

Report from NNDC Cllr Brown

Cllr Browns report had been circulated to Cllrs before the meeting:

Missed Bin Collections – significantly reduced; Shannocks Hotel (Sherringham) - being compulsorily purchased; Net Zero Carbon Strategy - The Council are considering options for installing solar carports over some public car parks and extend public provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points in locations where there is most demand; Public Toilets Improvement Programme – Stearmans Yard in Wells is open

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6 pages 2 appendices

DRAFT until AGREED at following meeting.

and the Fakenham and North Walsham schemes are about to start; Affordable Homes Provision - the Council is placed in the top 5 councils nationally for delivering affordable homes in the last municipal year; Tree Planting Promise – 90,000 trees have been planted; Elections and Call for Voter Identification Delay – This is unnecessary and the independent Electoral Commission have called for the new rules to be delayed because there is insufficient time, given local elections are only 4 months away, to train staff about the new requirements and to manage the public's reaction; Nutrient Neutrality - Most Councils in Norfolk are affected and to resolve the problem we have invested in land which will be offered to developers to buy credits and create mitigation measures to improve the area. We expect to be passing delayed applications for new build development in late February, early March; Planning Service Improvement Plan - The public consultation on aspects of how the delivery of the planning service by the Council has closed. The responses are being assessed; Section 106 Planning Contributions - Following the upgrade of the planning website with new software two years ago we can now offer online access to track how much is received and on which matters and in which areas the funds can be invested. Section 106 funds are used to increase affordable housing, create more school places and in public benefit schemes without which schemes would be refused. Use the words "Section 106 planning obligations" in the search field of the Home Page and you can access by using parish, ward, or type of funding; Glaven Valley Rural Conservation Area Appraisal - The public consultation on the second conservation appraisal affecting the rural landscape in the Glaven Valley will now be extended until 31 March. I have supported requests to extend the process and two further public events will be arranged in Holt and Blakeney on dates and venues to be announced.

Cllr Brown added that NNDC had not been successful in their latest bids from the Levelling Up fund for Cromer and Fakenham.

There were no further questions.

Report from Rev'd Trudie Morris, B&B Churches

Rev'd Morris report had been circulated to Cllrs before the meeting.

The key areas needed for improvement of church facilities to better host church and village events are – Car Parking, Footpaths, external lighting and accessibility for the disabled, electrics and WiFi connectivity. She also supplied information about the grants available. She noted that a project to improve the facilities at All Saints will require enthusiasm for it from the Church and the Parish Council and a project committee to steer it. The PCC next meets on 3rd March and requested the thoughts of the PC for that meeting.

The PC were supportive of the suggested improvements. Cllr Pearce said that accessibility issues should be addressed and Cllr Anderson wanted it noted that accessing the Church via the steps directly off the main road was dangerous.

Friends of Thornage (FROTH) Report

The next meeting is later in January.

Subscriptions for 2023 are still being collected.

Opportunity for members of the Public to ask questions or raise concerns

A member of the public stated that he was against the formalisation of the Letheringsett Road campsite, having already experienced disturbance under its current guise and it would be easier to object with the 28-day rule still in place.

7. To receive an update from the Chairman since the last meeting

How quickly things change in a short time - The GVCA has been extended, to give time for better consultation process. Hopefully, something will come out of this that is clearer as another application has come in the campsite which we will be discussing later. Very timely. Thanks to JPS for his work on this.

We have had the issue of the polling station consultation, which is why this meeting has been brought forward so we can respond in time.

The report from Trudie does indicate that the church is willing to address the issues, and we must thank Thornage Hall for the offer of Gregorie's Barn as an alternative.

Volunteers - We have been notified that the new village Noticeboard is near completion, and I have agreed to collect it, to save the delivery charge. We have either to pay to install it or ask our volunteer team to help. I have arranged to borrow a post hole machine, which should make the task a lot easier, so I am hoping we can replace the old notice board with no further expense to the council with the exception of some materials. I thank our volunteers for all they do, clearing the path opposite the telephone box of rotting leaves to make it safe to walk on, monitoring the Defib, delivering the newsletter and flyer about the campsite application.

At the same time the map has fallen down as the wooden posts have rotted. We must decide what we want to do with it. As I was collecting it to store in my garden two residents expressed their desire for it to be returned as they viewed it as part of the village

Only a short while ago it looked as though we would have more than enough councillors standing, now we may be short. I ask every opportunity is taken to encourage residents to stand for this first tier of democracy.

8. To receive a report on volunteer activities and to set the rota for the paper and bottle bank

Volunteer activities were reported in the Chair's Update. Paper and Bottle bank: April – Dan, May - Paul

9. To Approve any action regarding the NNDC Proposal to move the Thornage Polling Station to Briningham Village Hall

The PC acknowledged that the report compiled by NNDC was damning, but noted that it contained a number of inaccuracies.

It was noted that this Parish Council meeting had to be rearranged due to the very limited notice given before the deadline for making submissions.

It was further noted that the letter from NNDC didn't not inform the PC that they could make representations in person regarding this, and that the District Councillor Andrew Brown informed them of this during the meeting – 1st March, 9.30am

Cllrs noted the following:

NNDC is a Climate Change Authority, but is recommending that all electors from Thornage drive in their own car 1.5 miles to the polling station in the neighbouring parish, thereby recommending increasing carbon usage

Currently almost all electors can walk to their Polling Station

Any elector who decided to walk to the new polling Station in Briningham would be walking along a narrow, windy road with no pavements where cars drive at the national speed limit

Although there is a car park at Briningham Village Hall it is small and at least 2 spaces would already be taken by elections staff

The car park at Briningham Village Hall is on a bend with limited visibility, even in daylight

Moving their polling station to a neighbouring parish would be undemocratic

The Parish Council has received an offer from the Directors at Thornage Hall that they would be prepared to host the Polling Station in Gregories Barn.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to contact North Norfolk District Council with their reasons for retaining a Polling Station within the Parish of Thornage, listing their reasons and requesting that the District Council contact Thornage Hall to have the Polling Station located there – on a Proposal by Cllr Pugh-Smith and Seconded by Cllr Hammond.

The Clerk will prepare the report and obtain agreement from all Councillors.

10. To receive an update on Planning Matters

1. PF/22/2942 - Retention of partial replacement of windows on North, South and West elevations of the dwelling, Location: Town Farm, The Street, Thornage – pending consideration
The PC had no objection to this Planning Application

2. PF/22/2718 – Retention of two existing organic fertiliser stores, Location: Land south of A148, Sharrington – pending consideration
The PC had no objection to this Planning Application

3. To Approve any action on the new Glaven Valley Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan (GVCAA) Consultation

Cllr Pugh-Smith had prepared a Briefing Document for the PC meeting on 24th January. He noted that NNDC had a statutory duty to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and that the GVCAA (now on its seventh draft) was not looking at the totality of what was being protected - the heritage landscape together with the built heritage. It also did not explain adequately what are the special characteristics that justified its continuing status as a rural conservation area, of which there are only seven in England.

NNDC Cllr Brown stated that Purcell had not performed well enough and he was not sure they had the skills to undertake the rural heritage part of the GVCAA.

Cllr Pugh-Smith informed the meeting that he had met with Senior NNDC Officers and Cllrs Brown and Holliday and it had been agreed to extend the consultation period until 31st March and to hold 2 additional meetings – 1 in Blakeney and a 2nd in Holt – the dates have not yet been finalised. As the Review needs to be fit for purpose and to look at the totality of the Conservation Area, it requires further careful review. Further, as the GVCAA applies to a large number of Parish Councils and 3 large Landowners and these latter need to be able to make their properties fit for purpose in the modern era: a common-sense approach is required

Cllr Brown informed the meeting that the extension meant that the Consultation would not now be signed off by the current LibDem administration but would be finalised after the May Local Government Election.

It was agreed unanimously to finalise the response from the PC at their Meeting on 22nd March, on a Proposal by Cllr Earp and Seconded by Cllr Anderson.

4. Applications since the close of the agenda

PF/22/3017 – Thornage: Land south of Letheringsett Road

Cllr Pugh-Smith had also prepared a Briefing Document for the PC meeting on 24th January despite the short notice by NNDC of its public consultation. Cllrs expressed their concern that NNDC had not forewarned of its receipt (as it had taken some time to be validated), that the Application had not been uploaded to the NNDC website until Friday 20th January, there were only 3 weeks to respond and that the yellow site notice was not yet in situ. Cllr Brown clarified that the 3 weeks started from the date the yellow notice was posted on site and that this would be the same date as it was publicised in the Press. The Clerk

requested that this date be amended online for consistency and clarification, and, now as a standard practice by NNDC's Planning administration staff.

It was noted that this was the 3rd application for this campsite and that the application is to give the campsite a permanent presence. There is no undertaking given that there will not be further applications for expansion on the site either in number of tents or facilities offered, as this has happened on other sites owned by the applicant.

Cllrs were concerned that there was no assessment regarding the impact of the Proposals on the Glaven Valley Conservation Area, a significant omission which the Planning Officer should raise with the applicant's agent, given that the GVCA has been in existence since 1984, and that the publication of the GVCAA at the end of November was prior to the submission of the planning application by at least two weeks.

NCC Highways have previously refused the application on the grounds of additional traffic. Cllrs believe the traffic information and contentions to be flawed. As we;; as the technical submission not taking into account 'churn' effects and lack of familiarity with the road system – the PC will need to point out that the safety dangers at the junction A148/Little Thornage Road junction at Letheringsett will remain too great in their response.

Concern was also expressed that noise disturbance to local residents had not been addressed, which could be 24/7 and 365 days if the Application is allowed, given, too, the lack of proposed restrictions on days, hours of use or further pitches and facilities.

Cllr Hammond was concerned about processing delays and stated that the Applicant was entitled to a timely response to his application.

Cllr Brown stated that the Application would be called in so that members can pick up on any deficiencies. **The PC will be entitled to speak at the Planning Meeting (from 9am on a Thursday morning) – but they will be strictly limited to 3 minutes.**

On a Proposal by Cllr Pearce and Seconded by Cllr Pugh-Smith it was unanimously agreed to Object to the Application on the Grounds that further information was needed; concern about "creep" and noise disturbance.

The Chair reminded residents that, although the PC has a Consultees right to comment on the Planning Application, it will be up to the District Council to grant or deny the Application.

11. Finance and Governance Matters

1 To Approve the Cashbook and Payments List

The balance in the community account on 30th December is £5,163.23: this includes £2,715.30 for the new Noticeboard and £550 owed for the Village Sign.

Payments to be approved: 14/12/22: Countrystyle Recycling Bottlebank collection - £12.00, 24/1/23: Thornage PCC– Hire of Church for tonight's meeting - £18.75; 5/1/23 Harry Stebbing Workshop – New Noticeboard - £2,715.30, due within 7 days of collection of the Noticeboard.

The Clerk informed the Cllrs that she had not received any replies to her emails to Jim Richardson about the Village Sign.

Agreed by all, on a Proposal by Cllr Pearce and seconded by Cllr Anderson.

12. To Approve the date and format of the Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk explained that the origin of the Annual Parish Meeting predated Parish Councils and was the opportunity for all electors in the Parish to come together and be updated on the happenings on the village. It would also be an opportunity to encourage people to consider joining the Parish Council. It was unanimously agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 22nd March.

13. Dates for future meetings.

Wednesday 22nd March – Parish Council Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting; Wednesday 10th May – Annual Parish Council Meeting.

14. To Approve any action regarding an Event to mark the King's Coronation

Cllrs had been contacted by residents requesting an event similar to the Jubilee for the Coronation, based in the Church, when approximately 100 people attended.

Due to commitments, it was suggested that the Village Event should take place on Monday 8th May. It was advised that Cllrs would need to personally approach villagers to encourage involvement.

Cllrs agreed in principle that a Coronation Event should take place, but this should be added to the PC meeting agenda in March to agree details.

The following items were postponed to the following meeting:

- Approval of the following policies and guidance - Data Protection Policy, ICO FOI and Guidance, Guidance to members of the public at PC meetings
- Report on the PC's Banking arrangements

The meeting closed at **8.09pm** due to the cold temperature inside the Church.

Signed

Date: