

Minutes of the Meeting of Thornham Parish Council held on Wednesday 8 November 2017 at 7.00pm at the Village Hall, Thornham.

Present: Cllr S Mocatta (Chair) Cllr A Needham Cllr C Venes (Vice Chair)
Cllr A Brown Cllr B Gulliver

Also present: The Clerk, Cllr Elizabeth Watson & 36 Members of the Public.

**1. To receive and consider apologies for absence:
Everyone present.**

2. To receive Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mocatta & Cllr Venes gave a personal interest in anything concerning Thornham Village Hall and Playing Field Ltd. Cllr Needham gave a personal interest in anything concerning Thornham United Charities.

At this point of the meeting Cllr Mocatta read out the following report:

Formally, and with great sadness I announce that this is my last Parish Council meeting and I am now resigning both as Chairman of the Parish Council and also as a Councillor at the close of this meeting. I have for the most part enjoyed my time on the council and whilst the work has often been alternately challenging, hard or complicated I have been fully committed to helping the Parish in any way I can.

Unfortunately, in the last year, the atmosphere, and the attitude of the public, has changed. I find myself unfairly accused of various things, without the ability to respond. Specifically, I have been accused of negligence and conflict of interest. Despite these accusations either being withdrawn or dismissed it is personally wearing, indeed exhausting.

Council meetings have had an unpleasant and frankly aggressive atmosphere, when we as councillors are simply trying to follow the law, our obligations and the regulations; this escalation has been extremely disturbing. I urge every resident of Thornham, councillors or not, to think about their actions – verbal, in print or on social media - and the affect they may have on others. I have been very personally and very publically been attacked on Social Media. While I did talk to those involved, and have received full apologies, the level of stress that imposed on me is intolerable,

Keeping and improving good relationships with all members of the village had always been my goal as a Councillor. In the past we were successful at this, bringing various parties together we have: fostered good relations with second-homeowners, visitors and residents alike; planted over 2000 trees around the TUC field; re-established the overgrown footpath around the marsh and extended the permissive path to Drove Orchards. Working with local landowners and Highways we have improved the drainage on the A149, reducing the flood risk and making the road into Thornham far safer. These relationships, which we have built together, are in danger of disintegrating in the current climate.

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Ever since 1997, when we rented in Thornham and then owning a property since 2002, I have thought of Thornham as home. I have served almost two terms on the Parish Council, I continue to serve as a Trustee of TVHPF, I will continue to work with Thornham CC on Fund-raising (which has helped to get a new roller, the two-lane net facility, covers and lately three new wickets). All of this has been unpaid work performed on top of both my full-time job and having a family. I do not expect thanks or praise, but the recent aggressive and unpleasant behaviour of a minority of people, is more than I can stand.

Resignation is my only option. I would like to thank my fellow councillors who have served with me. Whilst we have not always agreed, I believe that we have together managed the affairs of Thornham Parish Council well. Thank you too to Sarah, who has been unfailingly helpful, often in difficult times and has always ensured the council, runs effectively and within all the regulations. I would also like to thank our Borough and County Councillors, Liz Watson, Richard Bird and Andrew Jamieson for their unwavering support and encouragement. I wish whoever follows me, Ian and Colin well, my hope is that the new council will be better received and the whole of Thornham will get behind the new Council and support it positively. Please, everyone, think before you speak, accuse, write or post on social media. Councillors are first and foremost real people, and also your neighbours.

So in conclusion, I am very sad to leave, I wanted to complete my full term, but I cannot. I wish the council, and the whole of Thornham, the very best wishes for the future.

Cllr Barrett explained that he was also going to resign at the end of the meeting this was mainly down to family commitments, he thanked Stephanie and Colin and the Council for all their support over his time on the Council.

Cllr Venes explained that he also had family commitments as was spending time travelling backwards and forwards to Wales. Cllr Venes advised that he was not happy with the way Stephanie had been treated over the summer though Ian and myself was also affected Stephanie bore the majority of the unpleasantness.

Cllr Gulliver thanked them for all their work whilst being on the council.

3. To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillor.

Cllr Watson said that it is with huge sadness that she hears about the resignation of three fantastic Councillors who have worked so hard and achieved so much. Cllr Watson said that it is a pleasure to attend your meetings. Cllr Watson said that Cllr Mocatta and Cllr Venes have been most co-operative, listening to the voice of the people and especially with the Boundary Commission in not splitting the Coastal Strip.

Cllr Watson said that the recent leaflet though possible for the best intentions of the producers has caused so much upset and unpleasantness. Cllr Watson advised again that the Calls for Site has to be achieved to help maintain the five-year land supply. Cllr Watson advised that the infrastructure is not in place for

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any major development in the village. As the current plan states no more than 5-10 properties, it is extremely unlikely that this will change in the plan for 25-35. Common Sense will prevail, Alan Gomm has agreed to come and talk and Cllr Watson urged the Council to invite him so that he can further explain. Cllr Watson hoped that the Neighbourhood Plan would be completed to endorse this and protect the village but some development on a small scale was needed for sustainability.

4. Adjournment of Meeting to allow for public questions.

Call For Sites

A Parishioner asked why Mr Bett would pay out for the plans if he did not feel it was possible. Cllr Mocatta advised that it would be a developer that would draw up and market the idea.

Another Parishioner advised that there were various undeveloped plots currently in the village. Is there anyway that the owner/developer can be made to develop as the plots look unsightly. Cllr Watson advised that there was no way as just starting on the footings etc is enough to protect the planning application.

Councillors

A Parishioner asked what the position is with the resignations and what happens now. The Clerk advised that she would inform the Borough Council who would send a form asking Parishioners if they wanted to call and election. The notice has to be displayed for 14 working days. After this time either an election will be called which has to be held within 90 days or the Council will be allowed to co-opt Councillors. The Clerk advised then she would advise that any potential people are asked to complete a skills audit so that any weaknesses within the council can be addressed.

Chairman's Allowance

A Parishioner advised that he had asked around and did not think the buying of refreshments after the Fun Day was not correct and was not allowed. The Clerk advised that it was within standing orders/financial regulations that the Chairman has an allowance and that it can be used for the good of the village. Keeping the Village Hall running is for the benefit of the village.

It was resolved for the meeting to return to closed session.

**5. Minutes of the Thornham Parish Council Meeting held on 11 October 2017
It was resolved to approve the minutes and for the Chair to sign as a true and accurate record.**

It was resolved to open the meeting to allow Mr Warham to give his Village Hall report.

6. Thornham Village Hall & Playing Field Report

Mr Warham said that he was going to talk about the Winter Programme for the Hall but hearing what has just been asked etc he did not feel it was appropriate to give any report regarding the hall.

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It was resolved to return to closed session.

7. Coasthopper Bus

Nothing to report.

8. Registering CL56 & 41

Cllr Mocatto asked if item 17 could be taken at the same time. **It was resolved for item 17 be taken after item 8.**

Cllr Mocatta gave the following report:

Background

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A TRUNCATED HISTORY, BUT ALL THE ESSENTIALLY POINTS ARE COVERED AND CORRECT.

The PC owns 2/49th of CL41 and the whole of CL56.

Some time ago, over two years, it was decided that the PC should register its land to prevent its loss, as had happened before.

The PC have appointed Hayes and Storr, around 2 years ago, to register CL56, working closely with then Hayes & Storr on behalf of CL41.

The boundary on CL41 and 56 was agreed, Shore road was agreed at PC land and the application was made to the land registry.

- There were a number of queries, including:
Shore road
- Boundary of CL41 and 56
- The registration of CL41 in the names of Stephen Bett and John Gethin.

All of these were resolved. The latter being the names on the High Court Order and so a requirement.

Current position

After filing with the land registry Mr Patrick, who owns the boundary land, objected and included in his claim some of Shore Road and some other extensions into CL41 from his land.

After some considerable time our lawyers recommended that we cease negotiating as this was taking a very long time and costing significant legal fees and that we went to tribunal.

It is expected that the tribunal will be early 2018

Costs

There are obviously legal costs involved. The major costs relate to CL41, of which the PC has 2/49th. The possible outcomes are:

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1. CL41 is registered as we expect and costs are awarded against Mr Patrick
2. CL41 is registered as Mr Patrick expects and costs are awarded against CL41

In the event of 1) while the costs may be recovered it may not be economical to chase them. In the event of 2) TPC will be responsible for its 2/49th share.

The PC has had legal advice and expects to win, however this is a binding tribunal.

The CL41 'Trust Account' (essentially the bank account for CL41) had a significant balance at August 2017. Even if 2) occurred it is likely that all costs would be covered by this, although the balance would be much reduced.

9. Meeting with Crown Estate

Cllr Mocatta advised that she had been asked to attend a mediation session with the Crown Estates, Natural England, Stephen Bett, James Morgan and Henry Bellingham. Cllr Mocatta has agreed to attend but after this meeting she will no longer be a Parish Councillor and was unsure about attending representing something she was not part of. After discussion **It was resolved for Cllr Mocatta to attend the mediation and represent and act on behalf of the Parish Council.**

10. Cattlegate Holders– Income

Cllr Barrett advised that there was no update regarding the Cattlegate Holders as everything was in the legal arena and it was not known at this present time if the fighting fund was enough to cover the legal costs. Mr Barrett advised that it was not likely that the Parish Council would be asked to pay for any additional legal fees but it would be taken from any payments due to the Parish Council for a number of years until paid in full.

11. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Gulliver advised that 900 questionnaires have been delivered around the village and about 80 have been received back so far. There was an issue with the caravan site but Cllr Gulliver advised that this was being addressed with the warden. Cllr Gulliver also advised that he was going to work with Mr McDonald and other local businesses. It is also hoped that the questionnaire will be on the website by the weekend. Cllr Mocatta felt that the closing date needed to be extended to cover everyone and well done on getting 900 out and a thank you to all the team.

12. Dyke Clearance

Cllr Needham advised that he had not spoken with Kevin Penty. **It was resolved for the Clerk to check when this would be completed.**

13. Memorial Bench

The Clerk advised that it would take time to seek permission from the Environment Agency and Natural England but had not received a reply. The Clerk asked that she is given permission to seek authority to place a bench even if it is not this memorial bench. **It was resolved for the Clerk to seek permission.**

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14. Castle Cottages – Update

The Clerk advised that she had received one reply from her letters and the owner had agreed to undertake the work.

It was resolved to open the meeting to allow Mr Seedhouse to address the Council

Mr Seedhouse advised that some work had been achieved but there was more tree work that needed completed. The Clerk asked that Mr Seedhouse give her the details so she can take up.

It was resolved to return to closed session.

15. Mapping of the Village

The Clerk advised that she was going to visit a neighbouring parish that was currently using the system, and would report back on findings etc at the next meeting.

15. Health & Safety

Cllr Barrett advised that Jan Mitchell had advised that this should be a standard agenda item. Nothing to report this month.

16. Police Re-Structuring

The Clerk advised that she had attended the Police meeting prior to this meeting. The Clerk advised that a PCSO costs more than a Police Officer for the first five years. The PCSO cannot work after 12 at night and before 7 in the morning, they cannot be deployed outside their area, cannot arrest and cannot drive on blues. There are currently 15 PCSO's in the King's Lynn & West Norfolk area. There will be 11 new Police Officers brought in. Some PCSO's around 1/5 will join up to train as a Police Officer. This means that there should be a smooth transition. Out of this 11 new Police Officers there will be allowed there to be two more Sergeants and these Sergeants will be allocated an area and they will act as beat officers and will be the liaison with the Parish Council. They have the ability to call on other teams when necessary. There has been a 22% increase in traditional crime but it is now recorded differently but there has been a 360% increase in electronic crime. More Officers will be placed into this group targeting this type of crime. There are also border teams stopping criminals from coming across the border and suspected people are being stopped on a regular basis. If the Parish Council has a concern they can request a Police Officer to attend their next meeting so that situation can be discussed.

**17. Meeting with Crown Estate
(Please see item 9)**

18. Electoral Review of King's Lynn & West Norfolk – Draft Recommendations.

Cllr Mocatta advised that as Cllr Watson advised it looks like the Boundary Committee agreed that the coastal village should stay together and the new ward would possibly be called the Saxon Shore Ward.

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**19. Accounts until the end of September.
(Please see attached sheet).**

Cllr Barrett went through the report and explained that everything was in order but could not give accurate end of year summary as it could go either way with the legal battles currently taking place.

20. Planning Applications and Determinations:

Applications:

17/01994/O Mr & Mrs D White Application for demolition of existing dwelling and garage and construction of 2 new detached dwellings at Quavers, High Street, Thornham. **It was resolved to recommend approval.**

Determinations:

None received

21. Correspondence:

- a) Email from Norfolk & Suffolk 4 x 4 Response wanted a grant
- b) NALC: Consultation re updating disqualification criteria for Council
- c) Norfolk ALC AGM Monday 20th November at 18:00 at County Hall

The following list of correspondence can be viewed by arrangement with the Clerk.

- a) Email from CPRE re Meeting in Dereham on Monday 27 November 2017
- b) Email re Be Winter Ready

22. Accounts for payment

E-On Energy Street Lighting – (November)	Direct/Debit	35.77
Tec Tamers Maintenance Direct Debit (Nov)	Standing Order	25.00
Thornham Metal Crafts – Village Sign	Direct Transfer	560.00
Elite Property Improvements –Village Sign	Direct Transfer	1116.00
ICO Payment – Data Protection	Direct/Debit	35.00

It was resolved for these payments to be made.

23. Payment Received

£250.00 refund on Neighbourhood Plan Website

24. Items For Next Agenda

Mapping – **It was resolved for the Clerk to write a report for the next meeting.**

25. Date, & Place of next meeting.

To be arranged

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.20pm

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ACCOUNTS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2017

OPENING BANK BALANCE AT 1 APRIL 2017	<u>17647.71</u>
RECEIPTS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2017	19752.75
PAYMENTS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2017	13297.71
SURPLUS FOR THE SIX MONTHS	<u>6455.04</u>
CLOSING BANK BALANCE AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2017	<u>24102.75</u>
AS PER BANK RECONCILIATION	
LESS ESTIMATED LEGAL COSTS	
AMOUNT TO BE REPAYED RE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN	1422.00
ESTIMATED EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR	5000.00
ESTIMATED LEGAL FEES PATRICK	3500.00
ESTIMATED LEGAL FEES CL41 REG	2500.00
TOTAL	<u>12422.00</u>
ESTIMATED BANK BALANCE 31 MARCH 2018	<u>11680.75</u>
THIS REPRESENTS AN OVERSPEND IN THE YEAR ESTIMATE AT	<u>6000.00</u>

Action List

Cllr Mocatta

- Attend and represent the Parish Council on the mediation.

Clerk

- Chase Kevin Penty re Dyke Clearance
- Seek Permission from Environment Agency/Natural England re Bench.
- Write to other owner re: trees in Ploughman’s Piece .
- Find out about GIS System re mapping of the Village & report at next meeting.
- Make Payments
- Make sure items for the next agenda go on agenda.

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