

Thorverton Parish Council

Additional Information for the meeting held on 13th June 2023

- 1 **Public Open Session**
- 2 **Declarations of Interest**
- 3 **Apologies** To consider any apologies for absence
- 4 **Co-option of new Councillors** Two vacancies to fill
- 5 **Minutes** To approve the meeting minutes of 9th May 2023
- 6 **External Reports** To receive reports from:
 - 5.1 County Cllr Squires
 - 5.2 District Cllr Roberts

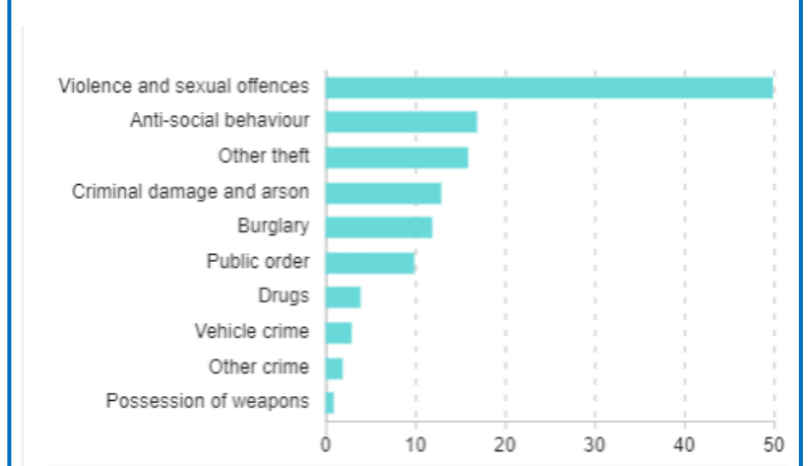
5.3 Police statistics

From Cllr Price:

Thorverton Parish Crime overview (Zero crimes in April 2023)



Breakdown of crimes in last 12 months:



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5.4 Saturday Market

7 New Council Administration Election paperwork and website update

8 Recreation Ground Including financial report for May

Email received 17th May:

I am a personal trainer and mental health nurse and would like to set up a new fitness class for parents and children.

I wanted to enquire whether or not it would be possible to use the Thorverton park area to hold a fitness class once a week?

I already hold public liability insurance, so I should be covered from that side of things, but I didn't know if there was a booking procedure or any permission I needed before arranging something like this in Thorverton park?

I look forward to hearing back from you. Kind regards

9 Projects

9.1 Jubilee Green & Barliabins (OSWG)

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9.2 Affordable Housing - including Upton Pyne & Brampford Speke project

9.2.1 Email from the Chair Brampford Speke, Upton Pyne & Cowley CLT

I writing to you in my role as chair of the Community Land Trust (CLT) that oversaw the development of 7 houses in Upton Pyne that are subject to the housing need and affordable rent criteria. We hope to provide a similar scheme in Brampford Speke over the next couple of years. Both will be governed by a section 106 agreement that gives priority to people with a local connection - usually living, schooling or working. Applicants from Brampford Speke, Upton Pyne and Cowley have the highest priority. But if a vacancy is not filled then applicants are considered from our contiguous parishes : Thorverton, Netherexe, Stoke Canon, Shobrooke and Newton St Cyres. The 3rd tier is the whole of Devon.

All potential applicants must be pre-registered with Devon Home Choice (DHC) which advertises the vacancies on its web site and is updated every couple of weeks. However, the CLT usually gets 7-10 days' notice that the vacancy will be advertised. This gives us the chance to notify known potential tenants and the wider parish community of an advert. We are developing an email and WhatsApp system in conjunction with our two Parish Councils that will help us disseminate this information quickly.

My questions are:

1. Would you like your parish council to be included on the list ?
2. Have you a system for re-distributing the information either to all who choose to be on your 'master' list or specifically those who qualify and want such housing ?

If you would like to take this offer further I will be happy to answer your questions or come and talk to the whole council should you wish.

9.2.1 Affordable Housing: Application for Community Housing Set-up Funds (Stage 1)

Council is invited to resolve to support the Thorverton Housing Action Group's application for a Stage 1 grant from Mid-Devon District Council's Community Housing Fund/Community Development Set-up Fund to facilitate the next steps towards a Community Land Trust in Thorverton.

9.3 New Cemetery

9.4 Quarry Car Park Line-marking, security and new shed

9.5 Bullens Close Lane Surface

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9.6 Rewilding Parishioner correspondence

Email from a Cleaves Close resident:

I am a resident of Cleaves Close and I have very much been enjoying the wildflowers being left to bloom recently. As you may well be aware May is a crucial month for wildflowers setting seed as well as for insect populations to breed and therefore protecting and boosting biodiversity. Areas of long grass and wildflowers also help reduce pollution and lock away carbon below ground. However I was saddened today to see all these areas mown down by I assume the council.

I was hoping therefore I could find a way we can work with the council and as a village to help protect areas from being cut, throughout the year but crucially in May so we can do our bit for biodiversity and climate change. I know we have some lovely wild areas in the Millennium Green but it would be wonderful if we can also keep some of the grass areas along curbs protected too. I see in Exeter they trim the edges and leave the centre to flourish. That might be an idea that works for us too perhaps?

It would be wonderful if you would let me know what you think or point me in the right direction if you are not the right person to contact.

9.7 Creating a Coronation Copse From Cllr Wills

During discussions planning the Coronation celebrations it was suggested that it would be appropriate to have children from the local school and playgroup plant some trees and create a Coronation Copse. There are about 120 children in the village and the Woodland Trust has a scheme to which we could apply for free trees to enable each child to plant a sapling each.

Here is a link to the information. It suggests options for planting a copse or hedge, and advises on the species of trees and how much land would be needed.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/>

I wonder if we as the Parish Council would like to write to local landowners to ask if they have any land suitable for such planting? Or whether, if we are going to plant a hedge on the boundary of the land we are buying for a burial ground, that could be planted by the children as the Coronation Hedge?

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10 Grounds Maintenance Handyman work and weed-killing

10.1 Email from a Silver St Resident

A couple of months ago, we were asked (through the Thorverton Focus) to put forward jobs that we would like to see done.

Please could our village handyman clear the stretch of pavement between 19 *the Court Barton houses* and 21 Silver Street of weeds.

The weeds encroachment now covers about half the width of the pavement, and currently contains a good crop of nettles.

Many groups of parents, pushchairs, small children and dogs have to negotiate this on the way to and from school, necessitating parties coming in the other direction to step into the road: and the children are at risk of being stung - later in the season it will be thorny brambles adding to the discomfort. One takes one's life (and that of one's dogs) in one's hands, stepping into the road, since most vehicles travel at well over the 30mph speed limit and the road is narrow at this point (no white lines down the middle).

The verges just up the road are carefully tended; please could we have this bit of pavement made safe and well cared for.

10.2 Completion of weedkilling in the village.

11 Planning Consultations

11.1 [23/00711/HOUSE](#) **7 Silver St** Retention of a replacement garden structure

11.2 [23/00844/HOUSE](#) **Higher Yellowford** NGR 292325 101204 Carport/store & office

11.3 [23/00689/FULL](#) **Perry Farm** NGR 292946 105640 30 ground mounted solar panels

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12 Correspondence

12.1 Annual Governance and Accountability Return Internal Audit Report

Further to the internal audit signed off in April this additional report was received: Internal Audit Report for Thorverton Parish Council dated 8 th May 2023 The internal audit was carried out on the 2nd May 2023 in situ examining all pertinent documents and checking the website of Thorverton Parish Council.

Internal control objectives A to N were checked alongside other items pertinent to good governance of the council – comments as follows.

1) Noted that all councillors still use personal email addresses for Council business.

This is not recommended as if there were to be a freedom of information request or a subject access request, the requestor has the right to trawl the personal emails if used on Council business. I recommend this Council set up council email addresses for all councillors.

2) Your Clerk does not as yet have a signed contract of employment. This should have been in place within one month of his starting date. Please expedite.

3) Council's Financial Regulations state that the Clerk signs cheques. I have suggested that this is removed and the Regulations be updated. The Clerk should never sign any payments whether cheques or internet bank amounts as this is considered a financial risk by the Council.

4) Internal control objective 'M' the period of public rights and objective 'N' to comply with the publication requirements for the 2020/2021 AGAR were ticked 'no' because of the absence of a clerk for 6 months of the year 2021/2022.

These findings are attached to the Internal Auditor report as a part of the AGAR to be submitted to the external auditor.

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12.2 Email regarding Chairman and Monitoring Officer

Email from a resident on 9th May:

This is correspondence to be included in tonight's meeting please. Please forward, with urgency, to all councillors today.

There is no need to respond, unless you would like me to come and explain more at your next meeting. Unfortunately I have more important plans tonight, but, would gladly attend your next meeting in June.

I made it clear when I last conversed with the Parish Council that I was re-entering another complaint to the monitoring office about Neville Lanes behaviour and Mr Foster's mis-management of Mr Lane and my complaints. As you are all aware, my email complaint about Mr Lane was upheld by MDDC with a long list of recommendations issued to TPC.

About 3 months ago, I received a letter from MDDC, upholding my complaint about mis-management by Mr Foster. As I always knew, Mr Lane was acting outside his parameters and my complaint was not dealt with satisfactorily by your Chairman.

This letter from MDDC is pretty damning about Mr Foster's conduct in dealing with my complaint and you have my full permission to obtain a copy from the monitoring officer by means of a freedom of information act request (2000)

13 Finance

13.1 Bank balance £ 60,415.32 (3rd May 23)

13.2 Cheque Signatories to the Parish Council account

13.3 Payments To consider the following payments:

13.2.1 J P Roberts for Hiscox Insurance renewal for 2023-24	£	746.19
13.2.2 Grounds Maintenance Invs BF20230121	£	374.74
13.2.3 Coxes Monkey & Spanner Ltd Coronation Party food	£	250.00
13.2.4 TMH Room hire for Parish Council meetings 2023-24	£	286.00
13.2.5 Thorverton RBL Donation 2022 & 23 min 2023-04 p5 para18.2	£	200.00
13.2.6 Neville Matthews Allotment deposit return	£	25.00
13.2.7 J P Roberts Clerk pay for May	£	424.89
Reimbursements Internal Auditor fee	£	71.30
	£	496.19

14 Business at the Chairman's Discretion

Items for Information Only No decision making during this item.

15 Next Meeting Thursday 20th July 2023