

## THORVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of Thorverton Parish Council held at the Memorial Hall, Silver St, Thorverton on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7pm.

### **PRESENT**

Cllr Andrew Foster (Chairman)  
Cllr John Hodge  
Cllr Stuart Crang  
Cllr Colin Marshall  
Cllr Andy Price (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Graham Sims  
Cllr Bryanna Uglow  
Cllr Jan Wills

### **ABSENT**

Cllr Shirley Nightingale  
Cllr Claire Heaven-Roberts

**IN ATTENDANCE:** 1 member of the public, D/Cllr Rhys Roberts  
Jim Roberts (Clerk and RFO)

### **1. Public Open Session**

A resident explained the problems with HGVs (especially articulated lorries) which cannot make the turn at Berrysbridge without damaging the properties either side of the corner. The warning signs are sometimes missed or ignored while some foreign drivers cannot understand the existing wording.

Council discussed the options of a weight limit for part of the lane or Berrys Bridge itself, a width limit, a width restriction or 'Unsuitable for HGVs' sign.

Council will write to DCC in support of the resident's attempt to  
*[The member of the public left at 7:13pm]*

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Crang declared an interest in item 7.3 as he is a Trustee of the Leonard Trust.

### **3. Apologies**

Cllr Nightingale who has to work and Cllr Heaven-Roberts who is unwell sent their apologies.

### **4 Confirmation of Minutes**

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 as a true record and the Chairman duly signed them.

### **5 External Reports**

#### **5.1 Devon County Council**

C/Cllr Squires had sent her apologies as she is unwell.

#### **5.2 Mid Devon District Council**

D/Cllr Roberts reported:

- MDDC is working on a review of Polling Districts, including aligning the Parishes with the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries. This work should be completed by spring 2024 and Thorverton is not affected.
- 3Rivers continues to take up a lot of Council time. MDDC is funding the loss from reserves which will inevitably affect future capital projects. D/Cllr Roberts is part of the Lessons Learned Team and

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their report is nearly finished. The reasons for the failure are quite complicated although the aims were good.

- The M5 junction 28 will be redesigned to provide better connection to Culm Garden Village, a planned development of 5000 houses with associated leisure and retail facilities. This requires £35m investment in a new Cullompton relief road. MDDC & DCC need to fund 15% of this sum.
- MDDC has been allocated £1m from central Government for economic and social cohesion improvement. D/Cllr Roberts hope that this may be available as a source of funds for the Barliabins project.

### 5.3 Saturday Market

The questions raised were both answered on the day and no referral to full Council was required.

## 6 Projects

### 6.1 Affordable Housing

The Chairman reported that:

Following the meeting of Thorverton CLT (TCLT) in The Exeter Inn on 28th Nov members of the CLT Steering Group held a Zoom call with the Church Commissioners (CC).

TCLT updated the CC on the recent meetings that had established the larger group that were present and went on to inform the CC that they intended to bring in a consultant, Geoff Pook, to help guide TCLT through the start up processes; Geoff successfully managed the Affordable Housing project in Beer over the last three years.

There were several questions from the TCLT members that had not been at the first meeting with the CC in October. These included a query over how the CC and the Diocese work together as there are parcels of land owned by both organisations around the village; it was confirmed that although separate entities they are still under the same umbrella and both expect to keep each other informed of significant developments.

The CC confirmed that any plots made available would be considered as Rural Exception sites and that the ethos of the "Coming Home" report that was instrumental in starting this process was very much in their minds; the report highlighted the need for all Affordable Housing to be Sustainable, Safe, Stable, Sociable and Satisfying. TCLT were pleased to hear that the CC representatives endorsed this proposal.

We then spoke in more detail about the sites available; the October meeting had concentrated on the north side of Silver St, in the gap between the recent Court Barton development and the older ex-Council houses. On further investigation some issues with the northern site were found that might not be so obvious from the initial desktop site appraisal the CC had carried out. The site was significantly higher than the road and steepened the further back it went; it was felt that this could lead to water run-off issues. It also had an SWEB sub-station on a pole in the centre of the plot that might be expensive to move.

The southern side of Silver St is also CC land and this may be a more attractive proposition; attention would have to be paid to the flood plain that is nearby, but with careful planning and site lay out this could be negated. The site is also level to the road so would mean significantly less preparation work. There might even be the opportunity to link the site with the Millennium Green in due course.

The CC was open to this site being made available under the same general conditions that were discussed at the previous meeting. In order to make our formal submission to them easier the CC will send a list of what they will need in terms of info and evidence before Christmas. We had already seen a similar template from Housing Justice.

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In further discussions the CC also confirmed that it might be possible for TCLT to include some open market housing as part of the scheme to cover some of the costs. They also said that they would need to know of the eventual delivery model, whether that was a partnership with a housing association or TCLT becoming one in their own right.

TCLT will support the drawing up of some preliminary site plans and a topographical survey and we will need to chase MDDC for the grants we claimed in the summer and this has been done following the meeting.

One quote from the meeting that could sum up the general mood of the occasion was when the CC said it was “in the business of enabling delivery, not imposing models”.

*[D/Cllr Roberts left at 7:32pm]*

## 6.2 Barliabins

The working group confirmed that the bid for funds has been completed and the proposal met with good support at the recent Saturday Market. The title document should not be needed but it is expected to be lodged with the Council’s solicitors who have been approached for confirmation.

## 6.3 Winter Warmth 2023/24

Council **RESOLVED** to increase the Winter Warmth to 3 days per week alternating between the two pubs with funding of £600 being sought from external grants.

## 7 Recreation Ground

### 7.1 Financial Report for November

Nil this month.

### 7.2 Hedge

Cllr Sims has organised the supply of 130 Hawthorn & Hazel whips for the end of February and Council thanked him for this excellent work.

### 7.2 Play Equipment funding application

The project will cost £75-80,000. The group of volunteers have worked enthusiastically to develop this project and their hard work is much appreciated.

A requirement of Valencia’s funding is that there is a non-benefitting Contributing Third Party. Thorfest would like to help but cannot provide £5k. The Leonard Trust and Focus are being approached for financial assistance.

Council may need to contribute to this £5000 but may additionally need to underwrite the promises of funds from the contributing third parties to help the project reach a conclusion swiftly.

## 8 Grounds Maintenance

Handyman work for the month:

- Trim hazel spurs and trees overhanging the path at Barliabins.
- Clean gulley from Cleaves Close.
- Clean leaves from the double gates to the singles gate at the school.

## 9 Planning & Consultations

### 9.1 [23/01626/FULL](#) Thorverton Memorial Hall New sign

Council **RESOLVED** to support the application. Cllr Hodge voted against this resolution.

### 9.2 [23/01740/FULL](#) Land at NGR 292898 100948 Crosses Barn New Holiday Let

Council **RESOLVED** to support this application. Cllr Crang abstained from this vote.

## 10 Correspondence Overgrown Vegetation on Silver St EX5 5LT

Council supported this resident’s attempts to get the vegetation taken back to the hedge line. The Council will also look to maintain this in the future if it is

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cut back and will consider using the handyman and addressing what can be done on the tidy-up day.

## 11 2024/25 Budget

Council asked for the following items to be considered:

- Developments of the Rec Ground eg place for pushchairs
- Repair and maintenance projects for the Thorverton Through Time project.
- Play Equipment funding needs to be increased.

## 12 Finance

### 12.1 Bank balance

Not available as statements are not being received. Cllr Crang has visited the bank in person to no avail and a letter will be sent (again) with the clerk's change of address signed by the cheque signatories.

### 12.2 Payments

Council **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:

<b>12.2.1 DALC</b> Cllr Training (Planning Responses)		£	<b>36.00</b>
<b>12.2.2 Exe Valley Christmas Trees</b> Invs 01-2023		£	<b>240.00</b>
<b>12.2.3 J P Roberts</b> Clerk pay for Nov	£ 425.69		
<b>Reimbursements</b> Display map for TAHG	£ 35.98	£	<b>461.67</b>

## 13 Business at the Chairman's Discretion

**13.1** Cllr Uglow hoped that the Council will support the Mid-Devon Mobility charity with a donation as she believes that the service is used by residents in the village. The GGWG will consider the application and bring a proposal to the next meeting.

**13.2** Cllr Sims wanted to address the damage to the kerbstones and turf caused by the recycling lorries as they turn in Cleaves Close. Council will seek a meeting with the NHO at the Close to see what can be done.

**13.3** Cllr Wills said farewell as she is resigning from the Council. She will be supporting the Council for the future. The Chairman thanked her for all her hard work over her 8 years on the Parish Council and wished her well for the future.

## 14 Next Meeting

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:37pm .

Signed ..... Date .....  
Cllr Andrew Foster, Chairman