

# THUNDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the THUNDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING 2

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 at 8.15pm in The Norman Wodson Pavilion

**PRESENT:** Cllr Steve Bosson, Cllr Deryck Dipper, Cllr Brita-May Hawes, Cllr Kim Saban,  
Cllr Natasha Smyth, Cllr Joyce Spackman, Cllr Martin Spackman,  
5 members of the public  
Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

Members of the public being present, the Chairman welcomed them and opened the meeting at 8pm

**ACTION**

### 23.038 Apologies for absence

Parish Councillors: Cllr Brian Taylor (unwell) **Accepted**;

Others: Sue Patell

### 23.039 Declarations of Interest and dispensations

1. Declarations: **Noted:** that Cllr Steve Bosson, being a trustee, has a non-pecuniary interest in High Cross Village Hall, and a dispensation for all planning matters relating to North Drive and The Glebe Field; that Cllr Brita-May Hawes and Cllr Kim Saban have dispensations for all planning matters relating to North Drive and The Glebe Field; that Cllr Deryck Dipper has a dispensation for all planning matters related to Thundridge Hill, including Ware North development. Cllr Brian Taylor, being a trustee, a non-pecuniary interest on High Cross Village Hall matters. Cllr Brita-May Hawes and Cllr Kim Saban have an interest in allotment matters as they are allotment tenants. Cllr Brita-May Hawes also declared an interest in the matters of North Drive lamp post W3, which is located on the edge of her property. Cllr Natasha Smyth declared a DPI in the Nursery and some Pavilion development matters.

Cllr Martin Spackman declared a DPI in that he had an invoice for payment approval.

2. Written requests for dispensations for declarable pecuniary interests: **None**

3. Consideration of requests for dispensations: **None**

### 23.040 Approval of Minutes

1. **RESOLVED: To approve the Minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> February Parish Council Meeting as drafted.**

The Chairman signed the Minutes.

**Clerk**

### 8.10 pm: Suspension of meeting for public comments

Parishioners present spoke as owners of the former Raj Villa, explaining that it is a club shop with restricted membership access that helps fund the church's school in Biggleswade. The problem previously experienced with rats has been rectified. Council said a concern had been raised about the noise of the aircon unit, particularly noticeable at night. The owners said they would seek to address that.

A parishioner noted that a tree has fallen across the footpath leading to the golf course from the allotments. The Clerk said he would contact the Public Rights of Way Officer. **Clerk**

It was reported that the lamp post on the common land by The Feathers is unstable. The Clerk advised that the owners of the land – understood to be the owners of The Feathers - are the responsible party.

It was noted that the Wadesmill footbridge has been cleared of the previously reported detritus and leaves. It was also noted that the Old Church Lane dog bin has been reinstated to its correct location (with thanks to Cllr Martin Spackman).

### 8.20 pm: The Meeting was restored to order

### 23.041 Village Life Magazine

Agreed: That Cllr Deryck Dipper write a summary of the meeting focussing on the Norman Wodson development plans, and that the Clerk would write a summary of the other meeting points. These to be sent to the Clerk to combine them into an article for the magazine. It was noted that the May

**DD/Clerk**

Parish Council election should continue to be advertised. Cllr Brita-May Hawes said she would add to the village social media.

**23.042 Police report**

The following report for the area was received from PCSO Leon De Bruyn:

**Area Crime Report FEBRUARY 2023**

**ARDELEY**

No reported crimes.

**BENINGTON**

BURGLARY – non residential – Town Lane – a stable block has been broken in to and power tools removed from within.

BURGLARY – residential – Town Lane – power tools have been stolen from outside an address in Town Lane, BENINGTON where workmen were working at a property. Suspects have removed power tools without the owner’s knowledge.

**COTTERED**

BURGLARY – residential – Suspects have been detained by police following the theft of oil at a residential business property in Cottered.

**GREEN END**

THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE – Unknown Suspects have stolen a tractor from a farm in Beggarmans Lane, LEVENS GREEN. Access to the locked premises was gained by unknown means and damage was caused to the main gates on exiting the property.

**LITTLE MUNDEN**

No crimes reported.

**GREAT MUNDEN**

No crimes reported.

**THROCKING**

THEFT – a theft has occurred outside an address in Throcking Road, THROCKING where car batteries have been removed from the front garden of a residential property.

**THUNDRIDGE**

2 x THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE (Number plates) – Offenders have removed the front and rear number plates from a vehicle parked outside the residential property on Cambridge Road and on Ermine Street.

THEFT – Colliers End – Unknown Suspects have taken a dog as it had escaped from the rear garden of a property in Colliers End. Enquiries were made with local dog warden and police were later informed that the dog had been returned. No details provided of Suspect.

**WALKERN**

No crimes reported.

**WESTMILL**

THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE (Number plates) – Offenders have removed the front and rear number plates from a vehicle parked in a private car park in WESTMILL.

**Other news and updates:**

- KEYLESS VEHICLE THEFTS – Land Rovers a preferred choice for this particular criminal offence, but other vehicles also targeted.
- VEHICLES TARGETED – There has been a notable increase in THEFTS FROM MOTOR VEHICLES, namely catalytic converters and number plates, concentrated in the Standon and Puckeridge area and routes close to the A120 and A10.

There has also been an increase in THEFTS OF MOTOR VEHICLES, with keyless entry. This has been seen across Hertfordshire and police are targeting patrols in this identified areas.

Please ensure that all vehicles are locked and secured, dashcams used where applicable and external light at your homes are working. External ‘sensor’ lights are recommended to illuminate the front/ side of your homes should unknown persons approach your property.

Please continue to report suspicious Vehicles that may be seen driving around in your area. If you are able to record the Make and Registration number of the vehicle, that would be very helpful.

Thank you.

PCSO Leon De Bruyn, PCSO Supervisor, East Herts Rural

**23.043 Planning**

**1. New Planning Applications**

<b>3/23/0417/FUL</b>	<b>Raj Villa:</b> 5-year change of use, restaurant to retail. <b>RESOLVED: No comments</b>	Clerk
<b>3/22/1663/LBC</b>	<b>Westmill House:</b> Reconsultation. Regularisation of window alterations, multiple internal alterations, roof lights etc. <b>RESOLVED: No comments</b>	Clerk

**2. Applications received too late for the agenda and other planning matters**

**1. Late applications:** None

**3. Decision Notices.** *Noted as set out in the Planning Appendix A*

It was noted that a late notification had been received that 3/22/1740/ADV and 3/22/1765/LBC for The Feathers illuminated signs has been granted.

**4. Progress on existing development: Glebe Field**

**1.** Cllr Steve Bosson reported on Osprey's reply to his 20<sup>th</sup> February email and his subsequent response in which he gave photographic evidence of the damage caused around the Village Hall, three bollards opposite the site entrance and discarded fence panels. A further response from Osprey is awaited.

**23.044 Finance**

*Note: Copy of full Cashbook spreadsheets submitted for following items 1, 2 and 3*

**1. Cashbook Accounts and Reserves to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

	Unity Bank	Saffron B/S	Redwood
Cashbook Balance 1 <sup>st</sup> February	58,871.83	83,113.19	85,054.82
Income 1 <sup>st</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup> February	1,106.66	0.00	0.00
Expenditure 1 <sup>st</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup> February	1,759.04	0.00	0.00
Cashbook balance 28 <sup>th</sup> February	<u>58,219.45</u>	<u>83,113.19</u>	<u>85,054.82</u>

**RESOLVED: To approve the Accounts as submitted to the Council.**

Clerk

**2. Bank Reconciliation as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

	Unity Bank	Saffron B/S	Redwood
Bank Balances 30th September	58,219.45	83,113.19	85,054.82
Unbanked payments	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unbanked receipts	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cashbook balances 30th September	<u>58,219.45</u>	<u>83,113.19</u>	<u>85,054.82</u>

**RESOLVED: To approve the Bank Reconciliation as submitted to the Council.**

Clerk

**3. Performance against budget to date**

The Clerk presented a detailed breakdown of the performance against the budget as at 14<sup>th</sup> March. Income to date totalled £40,601 against a budget of £47,598. Net expenditure to date totalled £38,360 against a budget of £47,598. The variances were itemised. Projected performance against budget to year end, 31<sup>st</sup> March was Income totalling £51,590, expenditure totalling £40,617. The overall surplus against budget is £10,989 with a projected surplus at year end of £10,973. **RESOLVED: To approve the performance against budget as presented.**

Clerk

**4. HCC Annual lighting: outstanding invoices**

The Clerk said he is challenging the invoices and seeking further clarification on ownership consistent with previous communications.

Clerk

**5. Insurance**

BHIB submitted a quote for £2,362.50 against the Zurich T&P renewal quote of £955.87. BHIB said they were unable to match Zurich's price. There was an additional reason to stay with Zurich T&P in that they are aware of the Pavilion refurbishment plans and have advised

on the insurance matters to be covered, which may require an additional premium.

**RESOLVED: To renew the insurance for one year with Zurich T&P for £955.87, excluding any premiums uplift for the Pavilion works.**

Clerk

**6. Payments for approval**

*All payments made under the General Power of Competence, LA 2011 s1(1)*

Clerk  
Recoverable  
VAT included

	Gross	VAT to reclaim
E.ON Electricity	255.88	42.65
Payplus Ltd	34.62	5.77
Zurich Town & Parish Insurance	955.87	0
Everflow Water – NIL charge – account in £64.43 credit	0	0
Broadmead Leisure: Play are inspection March	60.00	10.00
Clerk: reimbursement Printer ink	118.28	19.72
Clerk: Expenses March	28.00	0
Clerk: Salary March	734.64	0
HMRC: PAYE March	80.20	0
HMRC: Employer’s NIC March	7.84	0
Clerk: reimbursement shared MS 365 annual licence (half)	40.00	0
SP Saban Ltd: Repair pavilion main door	204.00	34.00
Clerk reimbursement: Printer paper	5.50	0
M Spackman: Relocate Church Lane waste bin	40.00	0
Frogmore Fencing: Awaiting inv £1,283.75 + £256.69 VAT		
HCC: Lighting maintenance: in contention		

**RESOLVED: to approve payments as per the Clerk’s list presented to the Council.**

**7. Internal Audit date**

Noted as being 21<sup>st</sup> April. The deadline for the AGAR submission has now been received from PKF Littlejohn and was noted as being 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

Clerk

The Clerk also said that Unity Trust Bank had recently informed that if the annual bank transactions exceed £100k, a different bank charge policy comes into play whereby each transaction would be charged at £0.15 for the 12 months following the threshold being breached, in addition to the £18 quarterly charge. It was agreed that the Clerk write to Unity Bank to seek clarification and if necessary say that the Council would review its banking arrangements if the additional charges were imposed.

Clerk

**23.045 Norman Wodson Pavilion**

**1. Building Replacement Evaluation Working Group**

**1. JCT Procurement Contract**

Clr Deryck Dipper presented a summary of the comprehensive confidential report on the tendering process that had been discussed in depth at the earlier *in camera* meeting held at 7pm the same evening, 21<sup>st</sup> March. The Minutes of that meeting should be referred to for more detailed information. The summary covered the following points:

The report commenced with a brief history of the project, followed by the procurement process for the works and then a summary of the bids received. The assessment of the bids led to the identification of a preferred contractor for approval of the Parish Council.

The intention was seek a contractor to undertake all of the internal and external works as one job in the school summer holidays 2023 thus enabling the day nursery to continue operating without a break. Tender documents were drawn up and advertised on Contracts Finder, including the scoring methodology that would be used by the Council.

A deadline of receipt of tenders was set at 10.00am, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The approximate value of the project which was shown as between £100k and £140k.

22 companies expressed interest, ten of which asked for a site meeting which duly happened and the same ten companies submitted a tender by the deadline.

The tenders were opened on 6<sup>th</sup> March by Chairman Steve Bosson and Councillor Deryck Dipper in the presence of Council Clerk Colin Marks. These were summarised onto a Bidders

Record Sheet. The Council appointed a Wodson Pavilion Tender Panel (WPTP) of four councillors: Chairman Steve Bosson, Vice Chairman Martin Spackman, Cllr Deryck Dipper, Cllr Brita-May Hawes.

The WPTP met on 9<sup>th</sup> March for a Tender Assessment First Level meeting to consider the ten bids against the scoring method, resulting in the following decisions being made:

Conscious of the Council's long-term reserve of £168k, the WPTP rejected any tender which was over 20% higher than the maximum guidance figure of £140k. Four tenders were in that category. In addition, one tender, whilst totalling a low figure, had too many provisional sums and was also rejected.

Of the five remaining tenders, it was determined that three warranted closer scrutiny. A list of clarifications was sent to each of these three tenderers and their responses received on 13<sup>th</sup> March were considered at the Tender Assessment Second Level meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March.

At that 17<sup>th</sup> March meeting, the top scoring contractor, Ofstrand Ltd, had a margin of 9%. The WPTP considered the gap between the two top tenders to be sufficient to proceed to negotiate with Ofstrand to become the Council's preferred contractor and to complete a contract and this proposal was put to the Council. **RESOLVED: to meet asap with Ofstrand to negotiate the finer points of the contract.** The Clerk agreed to contact Ofstrand the following morning to arrange a meeting.

Clerk

*Clerk's note: This meeting subsequently took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> March*

It was further agreed that a plan needs to be drawn up for clearing the Nursery in July; that Building Controls need to be drawn up; the architect is arranging this with EHDC Planning; WLFC have confirmed they do need a door access to the toilet, which must be locked.

DD/SB/  
Clerk

The contractor to provide containers – size and price to be confirmed. A Project Manager to be engaged to oversee the project on behalf of the Parish Council. If a solicitor is required, Winters of Ware have confirmed they do not have the necessary building expertise.

Liquidated asset damages values will be considered for the contract.

The Chairman proposed and it was unanimously **RESOLVED to formally record thanks and appreciation to Cllr Deryck Dipper for the extraordinary amount of ongoing work he has put into organising the contract and associated works.**

**2. RABI: acquisition of additional land**

No progress to report.

Clerk/DD

**23.046 Recreation Areas**

1. Play area: Safety Report. The Broadmead March report was received and noted: No action required.

The email from Sports England re funding for football pitch improvement was noted but no action to be taken.

Grass cutting to be discussed further with WLFC. Bullards have said they cut every two weeks throughout the growing season. Any fewer or suspension of cuts would make the grass impossible to maintain at the required standard for football.

**23.047 Allotments**

**1. 2023 Tenancy Agreements**

The current 2023 tenancy position was reviewed against the Clerk's report. Three tenants have yet to pay their dues. The Clerk to chase again and issue warning letters.

TAWG  
Clerk

**2. Land Registry Title Absolute.**

The Clerk reported that the position is unchanged: Land Registry has banked the £40 fee but has not yet sent the new Title.

Clerk

**2. Tenancy issue and course of action**

1. Update on legal proceedings.

**RESOLVED: Under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, press and public to be excluded due to the confidential nature of this report and in the public interest. This item to be deferred to the end of the meeting.**

**23.048 Highways, Footways and Public Rights of Way (PRoW)**

1. North Drive:
  1. Update on removal of lamp post W3: No progress. **BMH**
  2. Ransom Strip boundary/road kerb installation: Cllr Steve Bosson reported he has raised this with EHDC and is to be followed up. **SB/Clerk**
  3. Surface water problem by No 10: This matter is now with Network Homes and agreed to be deleted from future agendas. **Clerk**
2. Broken Wadesmill village entrance signs update: The Clerk reported that he had spoken to Cllr David Andrews who has agreed to take it up again with Ian Hollinrake of HCC. **Clerk**
3. Poor condition of Old Church Lane: Since this has been referred to HCC as a Highways matter, this to be removed from future agendas.

**23.049 Other matters**

1. **Coronation commemorative mugs:** Two schools had responded to the offer of helping with Coronation activities and it was **RESOLVED to grant £1,000 to the schools and nursery split pro rata against the number of pupils.** **Clerk**
2. **The Feathers ACV nomination:** EHDC decision is awaited. **Clerk**
3. **Parish Council elections, 4<sup>th</sup> May:** The deadline for nominations to be delivered (by hand) to EHDC Wallfields by 4pm on 4<sup>th</sup> April was again noted. **Clerk**
4. **Section 106 money:** There was a further discussion on how the available money might be spent within the defined categories and being led by Jackie Bruce's (EHC) latest email. It was agreed that the Allotments Working Group obtain quotes for the allotments items and Cllr Martin Spackman get quotes for the Wodson Field fence. Quotes to be considered at the April meeting. **AWG MS**

**23.050 County and District Councillor report**

No report received.

**23.051 Urgent and other matters not listed on the agenda**

None.

**23.052 Correspondence (Noted as per the agenda).**

- Herts Sports Partnership: Football pitch improvement funding (23.046)
- EHDC: May elections information (23.049.3)
- EHDC: re Section 106 money available (23.049.4)
- Bullards: re grass cutting 2023 (23.046)

**23.053 Matters for future agendas**

**Clerk/SB**

- Tree Survey update (April 2023 Meeting)
- Standon Alms Houses representative (April Meeting)
- Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) re excluding dogs from Wodson Playing Field
- Highfield Nursery debt repayment status if payments not made.
- To review WLFC RPII lease increase for Year 3 (April Meeting)
- To review annually Pavilion Fire Risk Assessment (next due after refurbishment)
- To review annually Financial Risk Assessment (next due May 2023)
- Quarterly review of Neighbourhood Plan Appendix H outstanding action tasks:
  - Retain The White Horse as a pub: *Despite a strong objection, planning is now approved.*
  - Nominate ACVs listed Neighbourhood Plan Appendix E: *The Feathers has been nominated.*
  - Make the Clarkson Memorial and the information boards more visible and maintain regularly: *Under consideration.*
  - Advertise local history in pubs (with accommodation): *Under consideration with Thundridge and High Cross Society.*
  - Promotion of the Turnpike and Doric columns on Wadesmill Bridge: *Under consideration*

- with Thundridge and High Cross Society.
- Seek formal designation of parts of High Cross as a Conservation area: *Ongoing*;
- Update: Bircherley Green bus depot re-development
- Other matters raised: Consider signing the Armed Forces Covenant (July or September)

**23.054 Date and venue of the next Council Meeting**

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7.30pm in the Norman Wodson Pavilion**

Clerk

**23.047. Clerk's report with press and public excluded under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960:**

**2.1**

Tenancy issue and course of action: The Clerk updated the Council on the position of the legal action being taken in May.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.50pm

Signed..... Dated.....

**APPENDIX A**

**Planning decisions and awaited notices**

<b>3/22/1663/LBC</b>	<b>Westmill House:</b> Regularisation for alteration to garage windows. <i>The Parish Council had no comments</i>	<b>RECONSULTED</b>
<b>3/22/2561/LBC</b>	<b>Swangles Farm:</b> Install solar panels on garage. <i>No comments</i>	<b>WITHDRAWN</b>
<b>3/23/0145/HH</b>	<b>Swangles Farm:</b> Install solar panels on garage. <b>RESOLVED: <i>No comments</i></b>	Awaited
<b>3/23/0202/HH</b>	<b>24 Poplar Close:</b> Erect garage. <b>RESOLVED: <i>No comments</i></b>	Awaited
<b>3/23/0109/HH</b>	<b>39 Arthur Martin Leake Way:</b> Extend garage and convert into annexe. <i>The Parish Council objected</i>	Awaited
<b>3/23/0019/HH</b>	<b>Westmill House.</b> Retrospective: convert garage into 1-bed annexe. <i>The Parish Council had no comments</i>	Awaited
<b>3/23/0046/FUL</b>	<b>Moles Farm:</b> Change of use; demolish agricultural buildings and build two dwellings. <i>The Parish Council objected</i>	Awaited
<b>3/22/2406/FUL</b>	<b>Land North and East of Ware:</b> <i>The Parish Council objected</i>	Awaited
<b>3/22/2370/HH</b>	<b>Standon Green End:</b> Demolish existing garage and replace, add two extensions, gazebo, replace gates and fencing, landscaping, <i>The Parish Council objected.</i>	Awaited
<b>22/1891/PL</b>	<b>Fusion Trading, Lowgate Lane:</b> alcohol licence	<b>GRANTED</b>
<b>3/22/2370/HH</b>	<b>Standon Green End:</b> Demolish existing garage and replace, add two extensions, gazebo, replace gates and fencing, landscaping, <i>The Parish Council objected.</i>	Awaited
<b>3/22/2153/FUL</b>	<b>Oakleys:</b> Retention of steel framed vehicle drenching facility. <i>The Parish Council had no comments</i>	Awaited
<b>3/22/1878/FUL</b>	<b>Youngsbury:</b> Erect extensions, internal alterations, etc <i>No comments, but LBC regs to be observed</i>	Awaited
<b>3/22/1740/ADV</b> <b>3/22/1765/LBC</b>	<b>The Feathers Inn:</b> Illuminated signs <i>No comments, but LBC regs to be observed</i>	<b>GRANTED</b>
<b>3/21/2533/FUL</b>	<b>Standon Green House:</b> New gates, fence, gazebo, decking, pond with fountains & lights, clay pathway, and associated landscaping. <i>The Parish Council objected</i>	Awaited
<b>E/22/0109/ENF</b>	<b>Land near Fabdens:</b> Enforcement investigating caravan site	Unknown
<b>E/21/0241/ENF</b>	<b>Watermill House, Ermine Street:</b> Enforcement investigation	Unknown
<b>E/21/0237/ENF</b>	<b>Standon Green End House:</b> Enforcement investigation	Unknown
<b>E/19/0448/ENF</b>	<b>Land adj to The Bungalow, High Cross:</b> Enforcement investigation	Unknown