

THUNDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the THUNDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING

Tuesday 18th June 2024 at 7.30pm in The Norman Wodson Pavilion

PRESENT: Cllr Steve Bosson (SB); Cllr Deryck Dipper (DD); Cllr Brita-May Hawes (Chair) (BMH);
Cllr Lynn Palmer (LP); Cllr Kim Saban (KS); Cllr Natasha Smyth (NS)
2 members of the public
Clerk: Colin Marks, Clerk to the Parish Council

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7.30pm

ACTION

24.105 Apologies for absence

Parish Councillors: Cllr Martin Spackman (Vice-Chair): Work: **ACCEPTED**

Others: PCSO Glen Stanway; Natalie Taylor (Foxley Group)

24.106 Declarations of Interest and dispensations

1. Interests: Cllr Natasha Smyth re Pavilion matters and in re a payment for approval. Cllr Steve Bosson in re a payment for approval.
2. Written requests for dispensations for declarable pecuniary interests: **None**
3. Consideration of requests for dispensations: **None**

24.107 Approval of Minutes

1. **RESOLVED: To approve the Minutes of the 21st May 2024 Annual Parish Council Meeting as drafted.** The Chairman signed the Minutes. **Clerk**

2. **RESOLVED: To approve the Minutes of the 21st May 2024 Ordinary Parish Council Meeting as drafted.** The Chairman signed the Minutes. **Clerk**

3. **Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Electorate, 21st May 2024: Not available** **Clerk**

4. **Items not covered on the Agenda: None**

Public Forum: *The meeting was not suspended for comments.*

24.108 Village Life Magazine

Cllr Kim Saban agreed to write articles for the remainder of the year. **KS**

24.109 Police report

The Chairman read the report for the area for May was received from PCSO Glen Stanway:

Crime Report May 2024

*NO RECORDED CRIMES – Does not include reports for domestic incidents.

HIGH CROSS: Residential burglary of a home (dwelling) – offenders entered by unknown means.

A warrant was carried out at an address in relation to drug supply resulting in arrests.

STANDON GREEN END: *NO RECORDED CRIMES.

THUNDRIDGE: Theft of number plates (Colliers End)

Criminal damage – wooden gate damaged

WADESMILL: *NO RECORDED CRIMES.

Other news and updates:

There is a trend of offender(s) across the county trying vehicle, property and outbuilding door handles in the early hours of the morning, and stealing contents where they are unlocked. Always ensure your vehicles and property are secured when unattended, and all doors and windows are locked, particularly overnight.

Your local policing teams are continuing regular patrols in hotspot areas at key times.

Please continue to report suspicious vehicles that may be seen driving around in your area.

If you are able to record the MAKE, COLOUR and REGISTRATION number of the vehicle, that would be very helpful.

As you may be aware, the online neighbourhood watch messaging system, OWL, has been retired. From April 2024, Hertfordshire Constabulary will be using Herts Connected which is part of the Neighbourhood Alerts system.

The new system allows users to “Opt In” to receive messages from various agencies, including local policing teams, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Neighbourhood Watch and Action Fraud.

Herts Connected allows residents to receive the latest crime or emergency updates and alerts, as well as information about policing events in your area. Local residents can get involved in helping to make their local area a safer place, tell us what police should be doing in their area, shape the initiatives that help to keep people and property safe, and tell us what matters are causing local communities harm.

We would be most grateful if you could share the link below in any parish communications and social media to encourage as many local residents as possible to sign up.

<https://www.hertsconnected.co.uk/>

Your cooperation is very much appreciated.

Additional Crime Prevention Advice can be found via this link:

<https://www.herts.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/>

Thank you.

24.110 The Ware Charities

Bruce Shearman presented the following report:

Meeting held on Wednesday 5th June 2024 2:30pm at Place House, Blue Coat Yard, Ware.

- This was the annual meeting, and all officers were duly elected. Valdis Belinis stood down as Treasurer responsible for Finance. Tony Silcock was elected in his place and was welcomed by the Chair on behalf of the meeting.
- The sale of 75, high Street, Ware is progressing slowly.
- John Davis (Chair) provided the annual report. Total grants for the year 22/23 were £28,110 which were down by £5,648 from the previous year. Assets increased from £1,982,990 to £2,109,450. Dividend increased from £51,731 to £126,459.
- The Financial report confirmed that the Independent Examiner had approved last years accounts.
- HCF had made four grants for February to March this year totalling £1,289. There were seventeen grants from April 2023 to March 2024 totalling £7,014.61.
- CA (Broxbourne) submitted their report with recommendations following the roundtable event which they organised held at the priory. TWC are to have an “away day” on July 4th to decide on the next steps.
- CAB has been forced to reduce the hours of paid staff because of funding issues. The service that TWC funds will not be affected. This service covers the Ware, Thundridge and Wareside areas.
- A review of policies for TWC is being conducted by a subgroup, to help establish which policies are applicable to the trust.
- The first annual rent payment has been made for the premises, in the Priory, that Ware Food Bank now use.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 11th September 2:30pm at Place House.

Bruce Shearman

TPC Nominated Trustee

Additional to this report, Bruce explained that the Trust is reviewing its MO since the rules are 600 years old and not relevant to today. The Trust is looking to improve the help it provides where deprivation is acknowledged and to better target those in need within the area covered by the Charity. It is also looking at areas not covered by other local charities whilst avoiding areas of overlap. It is important to improve awareness of the Charity’s work and councillors were asked to bring needs to the Charity’s attention when they become known. It is also important that awareness of potential help is raised in schools and also via notice boards and local newsletters etc. The Parish Council agreed to include a piece in the next edition of Village Life Magazine.

The Chair thanked Bruce Shearman for his report.

24.111 Planning

1. New applications

3/24/1012/HH 58 Ermine Street. Rear conservatory style extension. **RESOLVED: No comments**

Clerk

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

1. Late applications: NONE

2. Other planning matters:

1. EHDC request for S106 possibilities:

A climbing frame at Wodson Field and the refurbishment of village halls were discussed. It was agreed to draw up a list of agreed items for consideration, to include RABI land and car park. It was agreed to obtain valuations for consideration at the July meeting that will then enable a submission to be made to EHC in July/August

BMH

2. 1. Update on possible planning violation at a property in Martin Arthur-Leake Way:
Noted that a planning enforcement notice has been issued (see Planning Appendix A).

A parishioner reported another possible violation in AMLW – the Clerk to check with EH Planning Enforcement.

Clerk

2. Possible violation in Poplar Close. The Clerk agreed to follow up with Planning Enforcement if the property concerned can be identified. Cllr Steve Bosson provided a What-Three-Words location reference and Cllr Kim Saban to confirm.

**SB/KS/
Clerk**

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

Clerk

24.112 Finance

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

1. Cashbook Accounts to 31st May 2024

	Unity Bank	Saffron B/S	Total
Cashbook Balance 30 th April	60,815.70	21,313.43	
Income to 31 st May	1,138.75	0.00	
Expenditure to 31 st May	1,756.66	0.00	
Cashbook balance 31 st May	60,197.79	21,313.43	81,511.22

Clerk

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

2. Bank Reconciliation 31st May 2024

RESOLVED: To approve the bank reconciliation at 31st May 2024 as presented.

Clerk

Cashbook and Unity Bank balance £60,197.79

Cashbook and Saffron B/S balance £21,313.43

Total £81,511.22

Cllr Brita-May Hawes signed the reconciliation sheet

3. Performance against 2023/24 budget as at 31st May 2024

The Clerk presented a detailed breakdown of the performance against budget to 31st May.

Budget income: £53,105. Income to date £22,211. Year-end forecast £52,855

Budget net expenditure: £57,191. Net expenditure to date £4,218. Year-end forecast £56,491

RESOLVED: To approve the 2024/25 performance against budget to date as presented.

Clerk

4. Payments for approval

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

Clerk

	Gross	VAT incl
Payplus: Payroll May	36.94	6.16
Black & White: Fire Risk Assessment	298.80	49.80
Clerk: Postage and stamps	16.84	
Clerk: Printer paper	5.00	
S Bosson reimburse: Plastic inserts for chair feet (50% cost)	96.77	
N Smyth reimburse: No dogs signs	106.34	
Clerk reimburse: Ink cartridges	90.08	15.01
Valda Energy: Electricity – nil charge (£50.05 in credit)	0.00	
Clerk: Expenses June	17.20	
Clerk: Salary June	1196.10	
HMRC: PAYE June	294.20	
HMRC: Employer's NIC contribution	101.06	

Broadmead Leisure: Play area inspection June	75.00	15.00
Everflow Water: Pavilion Water	36.97	

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

The approved payments included extra 37.4 hours worked in April and May. **Clerk**

5. Section 106 monies

1. Update on order for fencing and gates on Cold Christmas Lane
The Clerk confirmed S106 application is still with Jackie Bruce (EHC) for approval. **Clerk**

2. Additional quote for allotments improvements
With Cllr Martin Spackman to get additional quote. **MS/Clerk**

6. Highfield Nursery debt repayment status

Noted: The Clerk reported that £279 of the £4,165 remains outstanding. The debt continues to be paid off monthly, although financial difficulties resulted in only £10 being paid off in June. It was agreed to accept these lower payments. The Clerk continues to follow up monthly. **RESOLVED: To accept the repayment position.** **Clerk**

7. HCC Annual lighting outstanding invoices:

In response to the Clerk's request to Peter Simpson (HCC Assets Director), Graham Baggott (Decreux) has agreed to a meeting at North Drive on 27th June*. The Clerk confirmed he has requested Peter Simpson or an HCC representative also attend since ownership of the lights is at the root of the issue. **Clerk
BMH**
**Clerk's note: this date was subsequently changed.*

8. Finance Report: No report presented.

9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

1. The Council noted that it does not meet the criteria for an exempt authority. **Clerk**

2. Internal Audit Report

1. The signed Internal Audit Report (p.3 was received and noted.

2. The Internal Auditor's written report was received and the recommendations were considered:

A) Although appropriate accounting records have been kept throughout the year, the auditor recommended that the Council move to a sector specific accounting package. The Parish Council was not convinced that would provide any real benefit except possibly for VAT reclaim, and a downside would be that with just one part time officer (the Clerk), cover during the Clerk's absence would not be easily possible. Spreadsheets can easily be accessed and worked on by an approved member if necessary. The Council agreed to continue with the present spreadsheet system for the time being, but to be open to reconsideration if circumstances were to change.

D) Annual budget: The auditor recommended that the level of General Reserves be budgeted and minuted. It was considered that the Council's General Reserve may have been misunderstood. The Council agreed to redesignate the Long Term Reserve as the General Reserve and to then relabel the former General Reserve as the Operational Reserve. To be considered further in the autumn when the 2025/26 budget will be discussed. **Clerk/DD**

E) Allotment fees: To be considered annually as part of the budget setting process. The Council agreed to include this as an annual feature of the budget. **Clerk/DD**

H) Asset Register: The auditor recommended the Asset Register be reviewed as per her comments and that Line 9 be restated. The Parish Council agreed with this, reviewed the Register and restated Line 9 accordingly. **Clerk**

L) Published information on the website: The Parish Council agreed to ensure that the necessary documents are published on the website. **Clerk**

- N) Website publication of required information: The Parish Council agreed to ensure the correct form of signed AGAR documents are published. Clerk
 - 3. **Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement (p.4)**
RESOLVED: To approve Section 1. The Annual Governance Statement.
 - 4. **Signing of the Annual Governance Statements**
The Clerk and presiding Chair signed the Annual Governance Statement.
 - 5. **Section 2: Accounting Statements (p.5)**
The Council considered the Section 2 Accounting Statements as signed by the RFO.
 - 6. **Section 2: Accounting Statements**
RESOLVED: To approve Section 2: Accounting Statements as signed by the RFO.
 - 7. **Section 2: Accounting Statements**
The Clerk and presiding Chair signed the Accounting Statements.
 - 8. **Exercise of Public Rights**
RESOLVED: To set the 30-working day Exercise of Public Rights period as Monday 1 July to Friday 9 August 2024. Clerk
 - 9. **AGAR submission deadline**
Noted: the deadline for submitting the AGAR to PKF Littlejohn is 1st July. Clerk
 - 10. **HAPTC Internal Audit Service 2024/25**
RESOLVED: To sign up for the HAPTC Internal Audit Service for 2024-25. Clerk
- Additional item: It was agreed to transfer £30,000 from the Unity Trust Bank current account into the Saffron Walden Building Society savings account.** Clerk

24.113 Defibrillator ownership and maintenance
Further options for the provision and ownership of the defibrillators were considered. It was noted that the defibrillators were never considered to belong to the Parish Council but that the PC would hold the funds raised for their purchase and upkeep. That is the current position.

With regard to a defibrillator being installed at the Pavilion, it was noted that WLFC had a portable AED that could be held at the Pavilion, but the installation and upkeep would be entirely the responsibility of WLFC and Thundridge Pre-school. **RESOLVED: That WLFC be permitted to put up a shelf in the Pavilion on which the portable defibrillator could be kept.** The Clerk to write to WLFC giving permission. Clerk

24.114 Cuttlefish Website contract
Cllr Brita-May Hawes presented a spreadsheet giving the options and costs for changing to a .gov email address. The options were considered and it was **RESOLVED: To sign up to the MS365 Rackspace option, subject to final review by Cllr Brita-May Hawes.** BMH

- 24.115 Norman Wodson Pavilion**
- 1. **Chair tubing inserts purchase and fitting: update**
Cllr Steve Bosson having purchased the inserts jointly with High Cross Village Hall to take advantage of a greatly discounted price, sought volunteers to help remove the existing worn-out inserts and replace them with new ones in time for use the following Saturday so that the new flooring would be protected from damage. Arrangements were made to do this. SB
 - 2. **Review of Pavilion defects for snagging and retention fee meeting**
It was agreed that councillors meet 30 minutes before the July Council Meeting (ie at 7pm on 23rd July) to look round and determine the issues that need to be addressed at the snagging meeting with Ofstrand on 30th August, ALL
 - 3. **Fire Risk Assessment**
The report by Black & White Fire Safety was considered. Action was agreed on the following recommendations: SB
 - Item 1: PAT Testing. Natasha Smyth to arrange for PAT testing of all relevant items. NS
 - Item 2: Heaters. Manufacturer’s instructions to be checked for maintenance and testing requirements. NS
 - Item 3: **RESOLVED: That only appropriately qualified contractors are to be used for any and all**

work on or in the building.

Item 4: **RESOLVED: To engage Chubb Fire & Security to deal with the fire blanket and fire extinguisher issues.**

Clerk

4. RABI: acquisition of additional land:

Following Cllr Martin Spackman's recent chance meeting and discussion with RABI Regional Manager Lucy Bellefontaine, the Clerk confirmed that he has written to her asking for assistance in getting an answer from RABI. Ms Fontaine has responded saying she will endeavour to get the Parish Council's request to the right person and to try and get an answer.

Clerk

Additional item: It was agreed to get a quote from Gigaclear to put services into the Pavilion. This would first require obtaining an official post code for the Pavilion and it was agreed that Cllr Natasha Smyth would pursue this.

NS

24.116 Recreation Areas

1. **Play area: Safety Report.** The Broadmead June report was received. It was noted that the wooden post of the junior swings that was splitting has now been sanded down and made safe. The June invoice from Broadmead reflects the £25 cost of the remedial work.

2. **1. WLFC second container request. RESOLVED: To permit WLFC to install a container in the SW corner of the Field at their own cost and liability.** Care to be taken that this is done when the weather is suitable so that the surface of the field is not damaged.

DD/Clerk

2. WLFC new lease. RESOLVED: That Cllr Deryck Dipper speak to WLFC to explain that the Parish Council will not agree to extending a new lease to a 7-year period, but is happy to renew it for 5-years. The new lease to state that in inclement weather, the football pitch may only be used in accordance with FA guidelines.

DD

Additional item: The broken gate/gate post needs to be replaced.

BMHMS

24.117 Allotments

1. 2024 Tenancy update

The notice for action on plots 35/36 expires 1st July. Action to be reviewed at the July Meeting.

ALL

2. Gate/access issue: Covered in point 3 below.

3. Plot 26 fence proposal: Neighbouring tenant ok with the proposal. Cllr Kim Saban to confirm.

KS

4. Working Group update: Next on-site meeting: 9.30am 12th August.

AWG

2. Tenancy issue update and course of action

1. Update on legal proceedings and CMC meeting.

RESOLVED: To defer discussion to the end of the meeting and to consider exclusion of press and public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, excluding press and public).

24.118 Highways, Footways and Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

1. North Drive resurfacing:

Nothing definitive update. Loose inspection cover outside number 17 has been reported.

Clerk

2. Unkempt area opposite the White Horse: It was reported that the HCC area has now been tidied by persons unknown.

24.119 Report by SNG of vermin infestation by Woodlands Road

RESOLVED: That the Clerk write to SNG to say that the Parish Council maintains its land adjacent to the Woodlands Road properties to an acceptable and appropriate rural standard, that SNG's contractor should produce any specific evidence to the contrary, and that the Parish Council has previously asked Woodlands Road residents not to dump garden waste on its land (which is fly tipping) and which could encourage vermin.

Clerk

Other matters:

24.120 County and District Councillor report

No report received.

24.121 Examination of papers held by previous Clerk

CLlr Brita-May Hawes reported that she and CLlr Martin Spackman had examined everything. All irrelevant papers have been taken to be burnt. Some papers, maps and books of possible historical interest may be offered to the local historian or to Ware Library. Papers relating to High Cross Village Hall have been given to Steve Bosson.

24.122 Urgent and other matters not listed on the agenda

None noted.

24.123 Correspondence: noted as per the agenda

- SNG Housing Association: vermin problem around Woodlands Road (24.119)
- Parishioner: Letting and associated parking problems at AMLW (24.111.2.2.2.1)
- Parliamentary researcher: Campaign to support improved safety of Lithium-ion batteries

24.124 Matters for future agendas

- North Drive:
 1. Update: Removal of lamp post W3. *No progress to report.*
 2. Update: Ransom Strip boundary/road kerb installation when road resurfaced.
- Other matters raised: To obtain an official postcode for the Pavilion and then to get a price from Gigaclear to get internet services laid on to the building.

Clerk

BMH
SB/EHDC

NS

24.125 Date and venue of the next Parish Meeting

Tuesday 23rd July, 7.30pm at the Wodson Pavilion. Councillors to meet at 7pm to discuss Ofstrand snagging issues.

Clerk

24.117.2 Allotments legal update with press and public excluded under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960:

The Council was updated on the current legal position prior to the Case Management Conference (CMC) meeting in September.

SB/Clerk

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 11pm

Signed.....

Dated.....

APPENDIX A

Planning decisions and awaited notices

3/24/0151/FUL	7 Eleanors Close: Detached front bike store. <i>The Parish Council objected to this application</i>	REFUSED
3/24/0151/FUL	Bourne House, Wadesmill: Extensions and landscaping. <i>The Parish Council had no comments</i>	GRANTED
3/24/0587/HH 3/24/0588/LBC	Sawtrees Manor, Cold Christmas Lane. Replace existing single storey extension with new; Install flue for wood burner. <i>The Parish Council had no comments</i>	Awaited
3/24/0705/HH	8 Chestnut Grove, High Cross: Retention of detached garden room at the bottom of the garden (to be used for family/friend stays, gym, study, multi purpose room) <i>The Parish Council objected to this application</i>	GRANTED
3/25/0352/FUL	Land adj to Wellcroft, Wadesmill: Erect 3 three-bed dwellings. <i>The Parish Council objected to this application</i>	Awaited
3/24/0284/OUT	Land West of High Road, High Cross: Up to 36 dwellings <i>The Parish Council objected to this application</i>	Awaited
3/24/0091/OUT	Land East of High Road, High Cross: Up to 95 dwellings. <i>The Parish Council objected to this application</i>	Awaited
3/23/0981/FUL	Land Off Poles Lane: Change of use from stables and paddock to C3 residential. Erection of 1 detached 5 bedroom dwelling with detached triple garage. LPA Appeal: 24/00032/REFUSE <i>The Parish Council objected to this application</i>	APPEALED

3/22/2406/FUL	Land North and East of Ware (Ware2): Hybrid application <i>The Parish Council raised serious concerns</i>	Awaited
PL/0343/23	Cemex Westmill Quarry. <i>Parish Council had no comments</i>	Unknown

Planning Enforcement notifications		
E/24/0032/ENF 3/24/0705/HH	8 Chestnut Grove: Erection of a residential accommodation not incidental to main dwelling.	GRANTED
E/24/0090/ENF	39 Arthur Martin Leake Way: Possible breach of condition 4 of 3/23/0109/HH use of garage as separate residential dwelling	Awaited