

Minutes of Thorpe-le-Soken Parish Council meeting held: Monday 11th January 2016 7 pm at The Baptist Church Schoolroom.

Present: Cllrs Daniel Land Chairman, Jose' Powell Vice Chairperson, Carpenter, Ewartr, Roe, Cty Cllr Erskine, Roger Hawes tree Warden & Alan Newman Parishioner.

Apologies: Cllrs: Blandford, Hurton, Fielder, Raftery & Rich

Confirmation of Minutes & Monthly Update of last meeting held Monday 11th January 2016 having previously been circulated, were agreed as a True Record & Signed by The Chairman.

Declaration of Members Interest: There were none

Public Participation: In order to protect & keep the name for Barnards Alley & Paradise Alley (both off The High Street) could new nameplates be put up. Councillors unanimously agreed to the request & The Chairman said he would make some enquiries.

Chairman's Report: As councillors are aware Nedret Brown a Thorpe resident collected a petition outlining extensive matters concerning the village i.e. Traffic Volume, size, speed, noise, fumes & parking all of which was turned into electronic & presented to ECC. A reply has been received with all the points outlined being acknowledged – the petition has now been passed to The Local Highways Panel for their attention . Reference inconsiderate parking within the village – it may well be that North East Essex Partnership Parking will be asked to get involved to help improve all parking locally. Further issues raised by Councillors at this evenings meeting were:

Installation of flashing 30 mph signs between Kirby & Thorpe

Chairman said during 2015 he reported various matters concerning Dale/Kents Hill & just to make everybody aware of exactly how long it takes to get anything done, a Feasibility Study is due to be carried out this year & if it is proven that work needs to be carried out then it will probably go on the work schedule for 2017.

Police Report: Refer to January Agenda for more in depth information.

Correspondence/e-mails: Refer to January Agenda for more in depth information.

Planning: 15/0191/FUL & 15/01922/LBC No Objection

Cheques presented for Signature: 002105-02115 incl: £2450.48 **Standing Orders:** £577.86

Tree Wardens Report: Reference reports received at January meeting, Clive Dawson has been informed & any further works carried out must be applied to The Forestry Commission.

T.D.A.L.C No meeting has been held – next meeting 20th January 2016.

District Councillor's Report: PC are moving forward and have allocated some funding towards The Xmas Festival. Arrangements to be made.

County Councillor's Report: Various reports were given throughout the meeting. Majority of matters are ongoing & being dealt with by The Local Highways Panel.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Playing Field: To date no football games have been played on the pitch so no money has been made this year. Enquiries will be made with reference to hiring the pitch out to other clubs.

Lockyers Wood, Highways/Pavements & Parish Footpaths: No reports were received

Street Lighting: County Lights: 1) Station Road – Clerk was pleased to report that work had been carried out to a Tree in the garden of the Malting's House, branches from the tree that were obscuring the light in Station Road have been lopped. 2) High Street – a new column has been put up opposite The Crescent but it is now waiting for UK Power Network to do the electricity connection.

Parish Lights: Clerk said she was aware that a light in Palmerston Road was out & also said that it was not viable to get the contractors out to do just one repair as the callout fee was £56.

Thorpe in Bloom: Donation received from The Social Club for their 2015 Floral basket. After a very long discussion, it was suggested and agreed that Cllr Carpenter works with Cllr Row to see what can be done to make the village look even more colourful this year.

Village Greens: Cllr Roe said there was still further work to do on The Green, the pond needs to be looked at & reinstated with consideration being given to shading etc., for the different species i.e. Gt Crested Newts & to do this work it will require specialist machinery that can be supplied by Mick Hubbard & his cost for the day is £240 (to include labour & machinery) After a discussion, Cllr Roe said he would like to propose that Mick Hubbard's verbal quotation be accepted, this was seconded Cllr Ewart & agreed.

Accounts to end of 30th November 2015: The Bank reconciliation & Receipts & Payments accounts were reviewed by The Finance Committee at their meeting held on 5th January 2016. The Committee formerly approved the Bank Reconciliation & The Receipts & Payments for period 1st October – 30th November 2015. A further reconciliation will be prepared for approval of the accounts to the end of the Financial Year 31st March 2016.

Clerk's salary & Spinal Column Point: In accordance with National Scales, in November 2013 The Clerk received an increase to her salary & there is talk that there will be a further agreement for a 1% increase this year. At the Finance Meeting held on the 5th, it was discussed & suggested that The Clerk received a pay increase from SCP 17 to SCP 18 – this would mean that the new hourly rate is calculated as £9.21 (previously £9.03) x 16 hours per week as per her contract = £147.32 x 52 = £7660.23 = £638.34 monthly gross pay (previously £626.08 If the council agree the Clerk will be entitled to an increased monthly gross pay of £638.34 plus a taxable office allowance of £55 & a tax free office allowance of £18. (Explanation of SLCC point scale is generally assessed on the time the Clerk has been Clerk, Knowledge & Qualifications). Cllr Ewart proposed that The Clerk received the recommended increase to commence April 2016,. This was seconded Cllr Land & unanimously agreed that The Clerk receives an increase to SPC 18 to commence from April 2016. Clerk's new monthly gross payment will be £711.34 previously paid £679.08

2016/17 Precept: Cllr Ewart gave a very informative report on a copy of the amended proposed expenditure/income that was produced & explained by Maurice Howard Accountant at the Finance Meeting & after an in depth discussion at the meeting Cllr Ewart proposed that the amended figures as drafted by Maurice be accepted (this is a 2% less increase that will be used from reserves) bringing the 2016/17 precept requirement for the year to £38631 which is a 17.7% increase. This was seconded Cllr Rich & unanimously agreed.

Speed Watch: Alan Newman said he had taken the Hand Speed Camera to Adam Pipe at Harwich Police Station to be recalibrated.

John & Sarah Gull Fund: this was carried over to the February meeting.

Items for consideration at next meeting: None

Date/Time/Venue of next meeting: Monday 8th February 2016 7.00 pm at The Baptist Church Schoolroom.

Close of Meeting: There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.