

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at
The Community Building, Holly Lane, Hapton
On 15th January 2025 at 7.00pm.

In Attendance: Mr N Potter (chair)
Mr T Ward
Mr G Bleach
MR V Blake
Mr D Daniels
Mr A Arber (clerk)

1 members of the public plus County Councillor Alison Thomas (arrived 7.25pm) and District Councillor Kim Carsok.

1. Public Participation– County and District Council reports can also be received during this time. (10 minutes maximum).

A parishioner brought up the fly tipping in Marsh Lane with many small item fly tipped over many areas and these all need to be reported one by one. This will be reported to the clerk to deal with asap. Also, on Norwich Road a parishioner has put signs on the side of the road which are dangerous for passing traffic. The signs for skidding needs collecting as well.

District Councillor Kim Carsok gave the following report.

Help Hub van will be in Wymondham on 22/1 all welcome

Diss swim centre reopened with Olympian opening it and many new users

Demolition on John Grose site has been started with plans going to public consultation in the new year.

Budget setting process ongoing with all district councils being unhappy with less the £500,000 being out in the budget. There is a big budget for waste incoming for such things as plastic waste

Devolution debate is ongoing, and a huge meeting called by the local leaders regarding the proposals and there is a chance the local elections may be called off, but this is unsure at the moment. Unitary councils in Norfolk and Suffolk are unknown at present. The government want all local councils to agree but I cannot see this happening,

County Councillor Alison Thomas gave the following report.

Devolution is moving forward very quickly, and county council were contacted on 16/12/24 with the proviso on local government to move this forward and in July last year this was postponed due to the general election. It took some time for the new government to not honour the original deal and the deadline for the new deal was on 18/12/24 with councils being allowed to put themselves forward for the priority programme and if we want to pursue this county had to agree by 10/1/25 and if they would like to do this then the local elections would be suspended due to the powers needing to be sorted due to the costs to elect people to sit for 1 year as local government reorganisation would need to take effect. County Council await the actual devolution deal is viable to all authorities and the government would be writing to all authorities to see what the deal would be with the local authorities sorting themselves out, but this could be decided by the government. Lots of issues will be raised if this goes ahead especially around social care.

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

One of the benefits of devolution would be that local authorities would be in charge of how they move forward, and the priorities can be aligned this way.

Lots of issues with the Long Stratton Bypass due to Anglian water having 24-hour traffic lights whilst doing the works under their emergency powers and more will happen around 27/1/with 24 hours traffic lights again

2. Apologies – To consider accepting apologies for absence.

Jenna Goodall Browne gave her apologies due to ill health

All agreed to accept

3. Minutes – To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on the 11th of November 2024

The council agreed they were a true record of the meeting 11th November, and all agreed to accept

Proposed Nick Potter

Seconded Vic Blake

4. Declarations of interests – To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest from members on any item to be discussed.

G Bleach for maintenance items in Dec payments.

5. Planning

- Planning application 2024/2379 Spreading Oaks Chequers Road
External alterations to house, demolition of attached outbuilding at rear and rebuild as an annexe. Demolition of barn and replacement with workshop/storage building including air source heat pump.
The council agreed to Support this application.
- To discuss the Planned Open Space Land
- To discuss Planning Applications and any received after the agenda is posted

6. Governance –

The clerk commented that he is working on an AI policy as all councils are using this to their advantage and time saving when drafting reports etc

7. Finance –

- To note receipts in November/December

To approving the following invoices for payment December

- To approve Payments to Parish Clerk Alan Arber for
Nov salary and expenses (includes back pay) £1008.67
- To approve payment for Clerks pension for Nov £354.19
- To approve payment to HMRC for Tax and NI £227.53
- To approve Monthly payment to Unity Trust for bank charges £6.00
- To approve payment to Viking for Stationery £58.93
- To approve payment to O Browne for Grass Cutting £345.00
- To approve payment to G Bleach for Maintenance Items £39.48
- To approve Payment to Wensum Print for Newsletter £400.00
- To approve payment to handyman for salary and expenses £310.60
- To approve payment to 3 mobile for Direct debit
for security sim cards £72.94
- To approve payment to Lloyd for Credit card £3.00

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

To approving the following invoices for payment January

- To approve Payments to Parish Clerk Alan Arber for Dec salary and expenses £823.35
- To approve payment for Clerks pension for Dec £285.60
- To approve payment to HMRC for Tax and NI £228.42
- To approve payment for clerk's attendance at practitioner's conference £626.00
- To approve payment to handyman for salary and expenses £304.00
- To approve payment to 3 mobile for Direct debit for security sim cards £72.94
- To approve Monthly bank charges £6.00
- To approve Monthly credit card, charge £3.00
- Payments on credit card NONE

- **Proposed David Daniels Seconded Nick Potter**

- **To note the financial position of the Parish Council**

The Parish council financial position at the start of December was £20525.61 which agreed with the bank statement and after the payments were deducted the balance was £17861.49 which also tallies with the bank statements for the start of January and after the January meeting we will have £15437.18 plus we also have a VAT return of £101.73 to reclaim but this will be done at the year end when the figure will be more substantial, The councillors agreed with the figures as correct, and the chairman signed both bank statements as a true record of both reports.

- **To discuss the budget document and the works done by the clerk and agree precept rise and precept request for 2025-2026 including new band d charge**

The clerk had worked hard on this and it was presented to the council at a recent budget meeting when after much discussion and the look at the parish accounts balance that are dwindling due to no precept increase in 5 years and the possibility of the pylons, Solar farm issues along with the upcoming possibility of taking on the recreation land under the new Long Stratton bypass and housing development, along with the extra work being undertaken by our clerk and the employment of a handyman it was agreed that unfortunately we would need to increase the precept by 50% to a precept request of **£37,567.90** meaning the band d charge would rise to £90.09 a yearly increase on £30.07 and a weekly increase of 0.57p per week. The council felt at this time it was correct to do this and agreed that maybe if it had undertaken smaller rises over the last 5 years it would have been a much smaller increase that will now have to happen every year to keep in line with rising costs

Proposed Nick Potter Seconded David Daniels

- To receive the clerk's appraisal and note action agreed
Nick Potter and Tim Ward undertook the clerk's appraisal and were very impressed by his work and continued training to get better, and it was agreed that he would have the one-point SCP rise his contract details from SCP24 to SCP 25 at a rate of £18.26

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Proposed Nick Potter Seconded David Daniels

8. Highways – to receive any updates regarding highways and footpaths.

- Highway issues

As detailed in public Participation.

Pothole by Yucca Cottage on the street

Redwings continue to send lorries along Norwich Road which are damaging the verges and these need to be reported to Highways and Redwings.

Pothole by Swan Lane on the doctor's side of the road by Mayfield's

- To discuss the Proposed Long Stratton new development and Land west of Long Stratton

To be dealt with later on in the meeting

9. To receive an update on the following current issues and to consider any necessary actions:

- Tree warden's Report

Nothing to report

- Footpath Issues

FP33 has now got a new bridge and its lovely.

- Maintenance

Our new handyman Simon Delaney has settled in well and has undertaken a few tasks such as cleaning and painting the bus shelter and the repair and reinstatement of the notice board on Forncett Road and is now looking at his next tasks to undertake and the councillors detailed the following for Simon to undertake.

The clerk reported that he had held a meeting with the Community Payback team them undertaking work in the Parish that needs lots of hands to complete. It was felt such jobs as Hedge planting, broken bridge on a bridleway and painting of the cabin and storage shed are roles they could undertake.

All agreed and it was detailed the clerk should contact them to set up a meeting asap to discuss the works they would carry out.

Dogs running on the community area not on a lead.

10. To receive an update on the Hapton Community Project

The clerk reported that he had finished the design of the sign that was needed to show the grant providers for the community project scheme, and this had been approved by the grant providers had the cost would be around £40 plus vat with a copy of the proposed sign shown to all councillors. It was agreed we would f=go ahead asap and once this was done the clerk could do the final close down report for the project before he goes on leave.

Proposed David Daniels

Seconded Vic Blake

- To discuss the possibility of installing wi-fi in the cabin

The clerk had spoken to thinking Wisp on this and they had produced a small report with costings much lower than the previous company Flotek. It was agreed for the clerk to contact Thinking wisp and arrange the site visit asap to ascertain if they could install the scheme and the time limit to install.

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

- To discuss Vandalism in the community project

This continues to be an issue, and the Police are involved, and all videos and pictures have been submitted to them and they are investigating the issue but are not too hopeful of finding the culprit. It shows how the cameras work to our benefit at present

- New Disabled Friendly compostable toilet

The clerk continues too look into this and there are companies at his upcoming conference that do these type of toilets so he will get all information he can and report back to the council

11. To discuss the latest Pylons information

The clerk has received no further information on this and is awaiting new information to come forward. It is noted that at the recent consultation the company has backed down to putting the cables undergrown on the Waveney Valley

12. To discuss the Norfolk Homes land and what next steps are

A question was raised on the land we are due to be given from Norfolk Homes and if we are going to adopt the land and the other small area, they are offering free of charge as to whether we would accept this offer subject to a further meeting with the management company to run the maintenance of the land. As yet costs are unknown, and the clerk was charged with arranging a further meeting with arranging a further meeting with Norfolk Homes and the management company ASAP

13. To discuss Parish Projects

- Newsletter

The clerk still awaits payment from 2 companies on this but there is a possibility of a new advertiser for the April issue

- Sam Machine

The clerk has received no report from Long Stratton Town council since the one in early September and he will chase them up on this.

The old one is still with Vic and can be used for spares and we will utilize the parish partnership for a new one,

- Tharston Phone box

The location needs determining asap and could be a job for the Community Pay back Team to install. But will need another coat of paint and glazing. The chair has a contact for the maintenance of this.

- Parish Councillors/Clerk training/Personal development

The clerk has booked himself on the Practitioners course in 2 weeks and 1 of his councils are assisting with the payment by agreeing to pay £200 with the other payment coming from both Tharston and Hapton Council.

The clerk has also booked himself onto the March NPTS spring seminar

- New Defibrillator and Defib Training dates to be fixed.

All defibs have been checked and are working correctly

Clerk to look at getting a bleed kit for the community area defib.

- Surveyors Land

Nothing to report

- Hapton Phone Box

This is till being used by parishioners and is a great resource for all

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

- Neighbourhood watch
Nothing to report
- Meeting House Field and CCTV Issues
The Clerk reported that he had received complaints regarding the CCTV camera on the field and that no signage was in place and questions were raised on who held the data and were they DBS checked. The clerk is fully enhanced DBS checked, and the CCTV policy has been upgraded to state this.
The clerk also reported that he gets many email of complaints about the field and feels it is a waste of his valuable time to keep dealing with this and the CCTV camera should be removed to stop and further issues on this and due to the number of people that do not pick up their dog mess, causing a hazard for other. The councillors discussed this, and it was agreed we would move the camera back to the community area asap.
District Councillor Kim Carsok his looking into providing more dog mess signs for us to put up and the clerk will collect these on Thursday 16/1/25
- Parish Orchard at Old Village Hall site
The clerk has reported the tap work to the handyman to be done asap and maybe the community payback team can help with this too such as planting the hedging and any new trees, plus regular watering and weeding of the site
- Dog mess in the village
This continues to be an issue, and Graham had sent a sign round, and it was agreed the clerk would print them out and get them laminated to be put up asap
- V E Day celebration
No report on this.
- CPRE Membership
The clerk had tried to join but there had been an issue with the council's credit card that is now fixed. The councillors felt that with the upcoming issues with Solar farms and Pylons that we should join at a yearly cost of £60

Proposed David Daniels Seconded Tim Ward

14. To receive a report from the Speed watch Group

Vic reported that the group had done no days, and the speed watch is limited on numbers and that it should be disbanded.

It was agreed that this would happen.

15. To discuss Green Initiatives moving forward including recycling and actions on the biodiversity policy

Due to the recent weather the clerk felt this should be deferred till April

• Green recycling of blister packs and razors

We have half a bin of these now and the clerk felt that in April we should look at Purchasing the boxes they get sent back in when we have our new precept.

16. Public Participation (10 minutes)

For any Parishioners to comment on any items that have been discussed during the meeting only

17. To receive items for the next agenda.

Year end

Dog Mess

CCTV in the cabin

Broken parts of marquee to order

THARSTON AND HAPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Long Stratton land

18. Next Meeting Weds 4th Feb 2025 7pm