

THORRINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the village hall on
Wednesday 2nd August 2023 at 7.00pm



Present: Cllrs P Sadler, Krinks, G Parks, S Parks, & A Sadler

Also present: CCllr Goggin, DCllr Scott, E Crook (Clerk), K Lott (RFO) & 2 members of the public

The meeting was called to order at 7.04pm by Cllr P Sadler, Chairman

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr Dewar.

2. Disclosure of pecuniary interests

There were none.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2023, having been previously circulated, were agreed by those present and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.

4. Public Questions

Two members of the public raised their concerns about vehicles speeding through the village. They expressed their understanding that nothing would be done until there were fatalities and accused the Parish Council of not doing anything about the situation. Several members of the Council refuted this and the Chairman went on to explain that they had purchased a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS), but had to go through a lengthy process to get permission from Essex County Council (ECC) to install it on Clacton Road. She went on to note that this has finally been granted and that they were waiting for the pole to be installed by the contractor. Cllr A Sadler suggested to the gentlemen that they could set up a community speed watch. Following a heated discussion regarding speed limits, one gentleman suggest that the village limit should be reduced to 20mph. CCllr Goggin explained that speeding is a criminal offence and enforcement of the limit is a Police matter, noting that they attend where there is a proven record of speeding. DCllr Scott offered to request that Tendring District Council (TDC) speak with Parking Partnership who may be able to prompt Essex Police and Essex Highways into offering solutions. The Chairman clarified that the last speed survey results gave an average speed of 37.8mph and noted that the 30mph limit is going to be extended towards Thorrington Cross, to incorporate Avocet Place and Edwards Drive, but that no date for this has been set.

5. Reports from District & County Councillors

DCllr Scott informed the Council that he sits on the Environmental Waste Working Party. He noted that the Veolia contract is up for renewal in 2025. TDC are discussing the possibility of moving to three weekly collections for black bins which could result in an increase in fly tipping. In 2025 the national government regulations will force local councils to do more for recycling. The plan to start charging for replacement red and green recycling boxes is on hold while research on costings is carried out.

CCllr Goggin noted the reports that he had received about the loose stones on the verge and road by Thorrington Cross. This now appears to have been cleared.

The ECC decision to cut back paths on verges once a year has caused issues in some areas. Some Parish Councils have chosen to take on a Service Level Agreement, where they receive the ECC budget for the work and then appoint a contractor themselves.

Cllr Krinks thanked CCllr Goggin for any part he may have played in getting the white lines repainted in Clover Drive, noting that he had seen a difference in the traffic behaviour since.

DCllr Scott and CCllr Goggin were thanked by the Chairman and left the meeting at 7.52pm.

6. (a) Planning Applications

23/00979/AGRIC FOR INFORMATION ONLY	Glebe Farm, Clacton Road Prior Approval Application under Part 6, Class A/B/E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the erection of an agricultural building.
23/00656/FULHH	The Rowans, Station Road Proposed two storey rear extension.

7. Playground inspection report

Cllr P Sadler expressed concerns that the inspector found defects on the newly installed play equipment. Cllr A Sadler explained that he had contacted Creative Play and relayed the issues raised, he was told that all swing chains start to show signs of wear from the very first use and there was nothing to worry about. The loose bolts on the slide have been rectified by Cllr A Sadler. He noted that the end cap on the gym sign was not missing, one had not been fitted in the first place as it was not necessary. One side of the wooden climbing frame was reported as split, Cllr A Sadler will look at sanding it down. The new basketball net is not broken, as stated in the report, it was noted that the hoop is not a standard fit, having only 10 fixings rather than the 12 on the net. Concerns were raised that the mobile goals were not checked and only two of the six benches were looked at. *Clerk to feedback to the Open Spaces Team about the report.*

8. Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) membership

Cllr Krinks proposed this be renewed at £60.50. Seconded by Cllr S Parks. All in favour.

9. Purchase of a lawn mower

Cllr A Sadler expressed his concern over the negative comments about the Council considering the purchases of the gym equipment, upgraded playground equipment, the new street light in Chapel Lane, VAS machine, benches and goals. He explained his research into the prices for a new mower and the savings compared to a contractor carrying out the work. He detailed prices, models and trade in options from a number of retailers, ranging from £10,000 to £20,000, noting that one company were only offering £350 to part exchange the existing mower. Bellets offer a brand-new Cub Cadet Z5152 with a 60" cut, which retails at just under £17,000, they will offer a discount and trade in the old mower for £3,000 bringing the price to £11,162. Proposed by Cllr S Parks, seconded by Cllr G Parks. All in favour.

10. Picnic benches for the playing field

Cllr A Sadler had previously circulated the quotes to the members of the Council for review. All the proposed picnic tables were wheelchair/pushchair accessible and made of recycled plastic. He highlighted the Kedel table priced at £1,102.80 inc VAT, with an £85 delivery charge, the NBB table at £475 with free delivery and the Earth Anchors table at £393.75. Earth Anchors also have anchoring kits available for £37 each. Cllr G Parks noted the benefits of benches with three slats. Cllr Krinks proposed purchasing two brown picnic tables from NBB and two anchoring kits from Earth Anchors, seconded by Cllr A Sadler. All in favour.

11. Goals on the playing field

The Council discussed the possibility of replacing the recently purchased goals with bigger goals, following some complaints on the Spotted Thorrington Facebook group. The Clerk advised that residents were asked to send in suggestions about the VAT money by email and of those received not one person suggested renewing the goals. It was also noted that no resident had attended a meeting when the new goals were purchased to request a certain size. After

Careful consideration the Council decide not to renew the goals. Cllr P Sadler explained that the Football Foundation have a grant scheme available if needed in the future. With regards to the abandoned goal and mannequins, the owner has not come forward. The items have now been held for twice the time that the Police hold lost property. Cllr A Sadler suggested the Clerk contact Gt Bentley Parish Council to see if the football group there would like to purchase them. It was hoped that £150 could be raised, which would help save the village tax payers from covering the whole cost of the unnecessary vandalism to the storage container.

12. Facebook group posts about meetings

Motion moved to the September agenda so that Cllr Dewar can be present.

13. Wildflower areas

The Clerk read out the notes from Cllr Dewar who has personally used a company called Meadow Mania. Cllr A Sadler suggested leaving the verge from Thorington Cross towards Brightlingsea to be a wild meadow area and a section of Hazel Close Open Space (HCOS) which belongs to TDC. The RFO noted that DCllr Wiggins had kindly supplied the contact details for the person at TDC to speak to and Cllr A Sadler requested that this be sent to him so that he could explain the area in question. He also suggested leaving an area on Chapel Lane playing field to wild flower. *Clerk to add to September agenda for further discussion.*

14. Report from the TDALC meeting

The report was circulated prior to the meeting, any questions should be directed to Cllr Dewar.

15. Accounts

Payments for approval and signatures at meeting on 2nd August 2023

Cheque	Payee	Amount	Payment Details
300334	Elizabeth Crook	£416.75	Clerk wages, accom. & expenses
300335	Katherine Lott	£147.08	RFO wages & accom.
300336	Mr A Sadler	£91.69	Mower fuel, gate stop & post caps
300337	Mr A Dewar	£390.00	Skip for allotments
300338	Bellet Ltd	£192.00	Rotavator start switch change
300339	Landscape Services	£720.00	Grass maintenance
300340	Tendring District Council	£65.94	Playground inspection
300341	Impact Signs	£139.80	MUGA, donations & dog signs

Cheques written	BACS	Direct Debits	Receipts
£2,163.26	£0	£93.12	£0

Balance of accounts with Unity Trust = £52,831.08

16. Reports from Amenities Representatives

Allotments	It was requested that Plot 16 be contacted regarding a lack of activity this year. There will potentially be several plots returned at the end of the current allotment year.
Playing Field	Broken glass has been cleared up around Mr Edward's memorial bench. Cllr A Sadler has installed a new rubber stop on the pedestrian gate.
Tennis Court	No report.
Footpaths	The footpaths near the pub and Church Road have been trimmed.
Tree Warden	No report.
Hazel Close Open Space	Dog waste left by owners continues to be cleared up by Cllr P Sadler.

17. Clerk's report

A resident in Clover Drive emailed the Clerk with regards to who to contact for applying for a dropped kerb, they were directed to ECC.

The organisers of the September fun day event emailed the Council to ask whether a donation was possible or to be able to access the remaining Village Day funds. The situation with donations was explained and some suggestions made about places that may be able to help.

A resident asked about replacing the no bike signs at the cut through from Heathlands to Clacton Road. Councillors noted that this might fall under ECC. *Clerk to report to ECC.*

Every resident that sent in a suggestion about how they would like the VAT rebate money to be spent was sent an individual email back that acknowledged their ideas and responded to the items that did not fall under the power of the Parish Council.

TDC Standards department have sent a letter requiring all Councillors to attend mandatory DPI training but the regulation they have quoted does not seem to fit so further details are required.

The parking department at TDC, under the considerate parking scheme, were contacted about the Island Landscapes van that continues to park opposite the exit to playing field, completely blocking the pavement. They have contacted the company and asked that any further issues are reported to them. It was noted that the van was parked there at the time of the meeting.

The bus network consultation runs until 5th October 2023.

The Clerk and RFO advised those present that they needed to offer the Council their resignations. When asked why they noted that increasing calls and messages at unsocial hours requesting that non-urgent work be done immediately was the most recent issue but that not accepting the rules and general work load were also major problems. The RFO suggested that it would be better if the Council hired staff that they were willing to listen to because the rules would not change. Cllr P Sadler expressed her unwillingness to continue in her role if said she had to change to yet another Clerk. Cllr A Sadler said it is very difficult to know when the best time to get hold of the Clerk is and that sometimes it takes several days for emails to be answered. The Clerk and RFO noted the volume of work and that items have to be worked through with the most time sensitive handled first. Cllr A Sadler asked that the Clerk not act in haste and suggested that guidelines could be worked out. He went on to suggest that the Clerk set out some procedures for discussion at the September meeting and that maybe some software could help to save time on some tasks.

18. Councillor's reports

Cllr A Sadler mentioned that the hedge outside 3 Chapel Lane has still not been cut back. The Clerk explained that she has written to the home owner several times but received no reply or action so she will report it again to ECC, who are responsible as the highway authority.

Cllr S Parks advised she has contacted the manager at The Orchards to chase the outstanding fitting of the fencing at the Cross. He explained that due to a fire they have been unable to get to it but that they were hoping to carry out the work soon.

Date of next meeting 6th September 2023

Closure. There being no further business to discuss the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.34pm

SIGNED 

Date. 6/9/23