

THORNBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of MEETING

Monday 14th January 2013 at 7.00p.m.

Present: Cllr. Mark Cole (Chair), Cllr Mary Taylor, Cllr. Charlotte Moore, Maggie Beach (Clerk)

Public: Cllr. Mayor of Buckingham Ruth Newell, (Buckinghamshire Town Council Cllr Fred Morris, Padbury Parish Council, Cllr Stephen Dickens, Padbury Parish Council, and 2 members of the electorate present.

1	Apologies: Cllr. Andy Spurr, Cllr. Melanie Staff, Cllr Rupert Bursell, Cllr. Ray Goodger,	
2	Thornborough Community Woodland – Funding and Update Cllr MC gave an update on the current situation (attached as Appendix 1) and a list of funding opportunities (attached as Appendix 2) A discussion followed with the Councillors from Buckingham and Padbury, with public participation. The Councillors were asked to take back information to their Councils with a request for help and support in encouraging volunteers to work on the woodland and to raise funds towards the management costs. Ms Claire Conway-Crapp, a parish resident, offered help with heritage fruit trees. TPC needs to look at the building on Thornborough Community Woodland and change its use to reduce the financial burden of paying rates for the property. The Clerk updated on actions from the previous meeting concerning Thornborough Community Woodland. She has contacted BCC to tell them we are happy with the Heads of Terms agreement and to ask what the next step needs to be. She has not yet heard back from BCC. She has also not heard anything further about the equipment requests.	Clerk to chase up both these issues
3	Public Participation session: Ms Conway-Crapp had attended to ask for Thornborough Parish Council's support in opposing the demolition of the heritage buildings at Coombs Farm as part of the recent planning application. TPC has supported the planning application discussed at the last meeting but had not realised that it included the demolition of heritage buildings. Ms Conway-Crapp gave TPC copies of an extensive report that she had written. Council agreed that while supporting the planning application they did not want the demolition of heritage buildings and will write a letter to AVDC planning explaining this. Ms Conway-Crapp also asked if a discussion about the preservation of local historic buildings could be put on a future TPC agenda. Council agreed.	Clerk and Cllr MC to draft a letter to AVDC planning as detailed. Clerk to action.
4	Declaration of interest in items on the agenda – None	
5	Minutes of the meeting of 10th December 2012- Agreed	
6	Review of Action Points Item 6 Greens Bye-Laws Item 7 Thornborough Community Woodland Item 8 Road issues Item 9 Street lighting - all on agenda Item 10 Broadband in Thornborough – information in 'Thornborough News' Item 12 Thornborough Parish Website – advertising –on agenda Item 13 Reedmace and stream – Not yet actioned. Item 16 Precept – on agenda.	Reedmace and stream still to action
7	Public liability for TPC owned trees This is an issue recently raised by our insurers. It is in our interest to monitor the state of various things we are responsible for and especially	Clerk to research management

	<p>our trees after the death of a person due to a fallen branch where the parish council was considered to be liable.</p> <p>A management plan would be appropriate to manage this issue. Clerk to research this. Dennis King to be asked to be our tree inspector. Cllr AS to be asked to do an audit of the trees that TPC is responsible for.</p>	<p>plan.</p> <p>Clerk to ask Cllr As to do a tree audit.</p>
8	<p>Greens Bye-Laws – update</p> <p>Clerk has forwarded the Bye-laws to Chandler Ray as the next step in formally putting them in place but has not yet had a response.</p>	<p>Clerk to chase up</p>
9	<p>Road issues: updates and road closures</p> <p>i. Speed Limit Review</p> <p>We have still had no response from Mr Baverstock at BCC to the letter recently sent about the Repeater sign on the Green.</p> <p>TPC have received a letter from BCC. The countywide speed limit review has now been completed. All of Buck's roads have been assessed and new speed limits have been installed, in accordance with National policy. However the County Council cannot currently justify its original aspiration to complete 'follow -up' speed limit reviews across the County so this won't be happening. A Key Decision will be taken by Cllr Peter Hardy, (Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation), about the way that speed limit changes will be made in future. The recommendation is that most future speed limit changes will need to be funded either directly by individual Parish/Town Councils, or via the Local Priorities Budget process by a LAF or from independent sources.</p> <p>Local communities will be able to decide whether to fund any speed limit changes as one of their locally funded priorities. All changes will be required to meet criteria set out in the current Department for Transport speed limit policy and full public consultation will be required. Transport for Buckinghamshire will develop a process to deal with requests for speed limit changes which will be made available once the outcome of the Key Decision has been confirmed.</p> <p>ii. Leckhampstead Road, Flood Depth Indicator.</p> <p>The Clerk has sent a letter to the Clerk at Foscote, however this road is not in their parish. The Clerk has now sent a letter to Leckhampstead PC.</p> <p>iii. A421/Lone Tree junction</p> <p>Cllr MC has taken this issue to the LAF where it is progressing. The Clerk has written about this issue to our LAT.</p> <p>iv. Salt bins - update</p> <p>This has not yet been moved but there is bad weather coming and this could cause problems.</p> <p>v. Road Closures</p> <p>Several notices have been issues for closures in North Bucks, the nearest are for Buckingham, Maids Moreton and Gawcott. The Clerk can give more information on request.</p> <p>vi. Flooding at the Nash End</p> <p>BCC Allotments and TfB are looking into whose responsibility it is to clear the ditch beside the allotment field.</p> <p>vii. Potholes</p> <p>There are several bad potholes in the High Street and throughout the village. Chapel Lane has had marks for pothole filling but they are quite arbitrary and miss out many potholes that are of equal depth. The Clerk reminded Council that anyone can easily report potholes on the TfB web page of the BCC web site</p> <p>http://www.bucksc.gov.uk/bcc/transport/ea_report_problem.page</p>	<p>Clerk to chase up.</p> <p>Clerk will report potholes to LAT.</p>
10	<p>Street Lighting - update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk checked that the price of the new lights was as previously quoted. It was as previously quoted so E-on were told to go ahead. We now 	

	<p>have three new lights as requested, however they will need to be updated with the other lights we requested to be updated. This update for these three lights is included in the price.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 3 lights currently not working (Bridge Street, Church Lane and the bottom of Nash Road) have all been reported again by the Clerk. • Clerk has checked Thornhill. All 4 lights on the road at the bottom are on, only two should be on. There appear to now be only 2 lights on the older road. Clerk was unable to find the third light. • E-on has said that the updating of the other 9 lights, the 3 new lights and the repair to the 3 lights currently not working will be happening next month. They will also sort out Thornhill.. 	
11	<p>AVDC Cabinet open meeting for Towns and Parishes – Wednesday 30 January 2013</p> <p>Although it was felt that attendance at this meeting could be useful, no-one was able to attend.</p>	
12	<p>Thornborough Mill Bridge Repairs</p> <p>The work has still not begun. The Clerk has received information that work would start on 14th January but only if the forecast was for 3 – 4 weeks of no rainfall.</p>	
13	<p>Thornborough Parish Website – advertising</p> <p>Stuart Mitchell made the following proposals: Background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thornboroughvillage.co.uk is a great website address and could be a useful repository for local paid-for information and advertisements • In the past there were a few ads on the site but no policy had been set for time of ad, when they could be removed etc. • There seems to be some interest in local businesses/people advertising their services on the website • Thornborough News already exists as a local resource for potential advertisers • As reported by Rod a while back, Thornborough News (while a highly valued local resource) is struggling a little financially due to increases in paper/printing costs etc. • TPC/the website doesn't really have a good way of collecting money from potential advertisers <p>Proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to agree with Rod the principle of offering advertising space on the TPC website via Thornborough News • Rod would be free to charge for this as he determined, such as: take a half-page ad for £x in Thornborough News or £y for Thornborough News and TPC website • Rod would be responsible for sending ad copy to post to the site • TPC will take instruction from Rod on additions, removals, changes... therefore it is his responsibility to ensure all displayed ads are paid for/up to date • The TPC website would clearly state the "business arrangement" (and why) so there would be no cause for suspicion, complaint etc. and any potential advertisers would know who to approach <p>After discussion council proposed that it accept Stuart' Mitchell's proposal, proposed Cllr MT, seconded Cllr CM, agreed unanimous</p>	<p>Cllr MC will explain this new arrangement to Rod James, editor of 'Thornboro' News'</p>
14	<p>Dog Waste Collections - update –deferred to next meeting</p>	<p>Feb agenda</p>
15	<p>Local Area Forum –</p> <p>i. Report – Cllr MC presented his report (attached as Appendix 3). Noted</p> <p>ii. 3 priority areas information- noted</p>	
16	<p>Planning:</p> <p>a) <u>Ref. 12/02748/AGN</u> Cloverick Moor, Padbury Rd., Thornborough, MK18 2EB Erection of hay/straw storage. Clerk has also received a note saying that planning permission has already been granted. TPC</p>	<p>Clerk to send response to AVDC</p>

	<p>householders pay may change a little, because the amount AVDC collect for us is spread across the parish's properties and may change slightly if properties have been re-categorised or if there have been a change in the number of properties.</p> <p>This represents £61.14 for a Band D household – other bands will pay less, others more. A slight increase was considered following the Government's decision not to protect parish and town councils against the impact of the replacement scheme for Council Tax Benefits, Localised Council Tax Support, which was confirmed in December, but we decided to swallow a £1600 shortfall, which means we will receive £16,162.94 from AVDC in the coming financial year.</p>	<p>Clerk to send in Precept request for £16,162.94 to AVDC</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>A.O.B. , other correspondence and Other Councillor Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Making the best use of winter warmth payments ii. Community Impact Bucks – Introducing Men in Sheds Aylesbury iii. Carers course on managing challenging behaviour – 19th February 10.00 – 1.00 Buckingham Community Centre iv. Recruiting fosters carers for Buckinghamshire County Council. v. Aylesbury Vale Community Safety Partnership newsletter vi. LINK Update Event vii. AVDC – News for the Parishes – forwarded to Cllrs. viii. Community Impact Bucks – Training and Events January 2013 ix. Community Impact Bucks – Trustee Forum for Charities - 14th January, 2013 forwarded to Bernard Garbe for Village Hall Trustees x. Community Impact Bucks – free help and advice event 17th Jan xi. January Speed Campaign <p>All noted. Recruiting foster carers to go into '<i>Thornborough News</i>'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr MT reported that the playground needs attention. The vegetation needs trimming back all round the fencing and there is a swing missing. • The Boxing Day Walk was very successful. The Chair, supported by the council, congratulated Cllr MT on organising this very successful event. Cllr MT thanked Cllr AS for leading the walk. There are plans for more walks throughout the year. 	<p>Clerk to forward Foster Carers item for inclusion in <i>Thornboro' News</i>'</p> <p>Clerk to report to Cllr AS.</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>Date of next meeting; 11th February 2013 at 7.00p.m. The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.</p>	

APPENDIX 1

THORNBOROUGH COMMUNITY WOODLANDS

Thornborough Community Woodlands were created at Coombs by Bucks County Council Countryside Services in 1995 on the County Council-owned Coombs and Brightmoor Farms, and the trees were planted over a five-year period.

They cover 168 acres (34 hectares) and provide a paradise for walkers and a safe environment for their dogs; a demonstration of good forestry and conservation practices; and a haven for wildlife. The Woodlands include a medieval quarry – which is now a Bucks Heritage Site and a Regionally Important Geological Site – and are crossed by several public footpaths. They are wholly in the Parish of Thornborough, but are used by residents from surrounding parishes and from Buckingham.

Until this year Bucks CC has continued to manage the Community Woodlands, although from 1st April 2012, its Countryside Environment Group was disbanded under cost-cutting measures, and the county council would down its manage all of its 45 similar sites. Parish councils or local groups are being asked to take over the responsibility of funding and maintaining them, but it is against current Bucks CC policy to sell any of these sites.

We accordingly called an emergency meeting with our neighbouring parishes, our three local AVDC councillors and representatives of Bucks CC, to decide how to progress. That meeting in February 2012 concluded that we had two options if we wanted to continue to enjoy this public amenity. The first was to take a rent-free 99-year lease on the Community Woodlands, then fund and maintain them ourselves, with or without help from neighbouring parishes.

The second option was to offer the same lease to an organisation or group – such as the Chiltern Society or BBONT - willing to take on funding and management itself. Although there is no SSSI within the amenity, it is a significant site and the largest of the BCC ones.

Maintenance would include mowing and controlled grazing, hedge-cutting, fencing and gate repairs, as well as thinning and brashing of trees. Bucks CC spent £20,000 in the last financial year to ensure that everything was in pristine condition before the handover, but we are assured that that was an exceptional cost, and it would normally be in the region of £7000 per annum, which includes a business rate of £1700.

After due diligence, Thornborough Parish Council approved the first option, and a heads of agreement has been drawn up to take over the Woodlands on a 99-year lease at an annual peppercorn rent (£1 if demanded). We are now seeking assistance from our neighbours to help to raise funding to maintain and manage the Woodlands.

Funding can be made available through Leader grants, stewardship schemes, local authority grants and felling income.

MARK COLE

Chairman, Thornborough Parish Council

January 2013

APPENDIX 2

THORNBOROUGH COMMUNITY WOODLAND FUNDING

The Community Woodlands will require up to £7000 per annum to keep them effectively maintained and managed. This is a ceiling figure, and we would hope that with volunteer help, will be considerably below that. The figure also includes the current £1700 pa business rates on the County Council depot which we are required to take over with the Woodlands, which we will try to have reduced or even cancelled if this becomes a charitable enterprise.

Until we are the official tenants of the Thornborough Community Woodlands, we are unable to formally apply for grants or investigate charitable status.

In the meantime, we are actively looking at all funding avenues, so that there is no financial drain on the parish or the community. We would seek the help of our neighbouring parishes and Buckingham to try to source these grant funds.

Possible funding avenues:

- **Greenspace Transition Fund** - grants of up to £3000 for organisations taking on management of green spaces from Bucks County Council. Closes February 2013. (Communityimpactbucks.org.uk)
- **DEFRA** grants of up to £25,000 to invest in green projects, new machinery in an environmentally friendly way. Second grant round about to open. (Defra.gov.uk)
- **The Big Tree Plant** – Community Tree Planting (England). £500 - £25,000 grants to establish planting projects in areas that would benefit communities. Closes March 2013. (Forestry.gov.uk).
- **Heritage Lottery Fund** - grants available up to £100,000 for local heritage sites. The medieval quarry is already a Bucks Heritage Site & Regionally Important Geological Site, which will require upkeep and eventually upgrading (HLF.org.uk)
- **LEADER Grants** – up to £50,000 available for projects benefitting rural communities. Closes 2013. (Leader-programme.ork.uk)
- **Environmental Stewardship** is an agri-environment scheme which offers payments to farmers and land managers in England for effective land management to protect and enhance the environment and wildlife. Ongoing. (defra.org.uk)

Thornborough Parish Council
January 2013

APPENDIX 3

BUCKINGHAM AREA LOCAL FORUM Dec 13th 2012, Steeple Claydon Village Hall

The main concern at the quarterly meeting of the Buckingham Local Area Forum, at which our local authorities (County Council, AVDC, Town and Parish Councils), and police, fire and other services have representation, was the continuing lack of superfast broadband in North Bucks.

The Forum was told that DEFRA has European Community funding available to extend the broadband reach to rural communities which still do not have access to fibre-optic cabling, and this will be investigated in time for the March meeting, at which Superfastforbucks will be invited to speak.

There was also considerable discussion over the worsening state of roads in the north of the county, with potholes and collapsed surfaces widely reported. Forum chairman County Cllr David Polhill said that Transport for Bucks was working on a priority listing for the non-A roads, but there was only so much money available, and it could take up to three years to address all the problems.

The September meeting identified the top three priorities on which it can act, and which will guide its work in the coming year in activity, commissioning and influencing:

- *** Youth groups which can have a say in the running of their local affairs** *
- **Speeding and road safety* Support for Village Activity Centres**

All three will be addressed in the coming financial year, with £45,000 ring-fenced for the three projects; £15,000 has already been made available for a mobile speed camera programme to visit villages which have requested it, not to prosecute drivers but to warn them of their speeds. Youth needs and village activity centres – such as summer activities for children – will be discussed in March.

Saturday return bus services to Buckingham from the 26 North Bucks villages have already started, although because of a County Council management change (*Paul Hodson has stepped in to take over Mark Grindall's role in the short term*), not all villages were informed, Thornborough included. The LAF will continue to gauge usage and benefit for up to six months, and then make a final decision; Buckingham Town Council and Buckingham Traders Association will be asked to make a £3000 contribution if it proves successful, and parishes will also be asked for subs.

Thames Valley's first Police & Crime Commissioner, Anthony Stansfeld from Reading, has already taken up office, and has appointed as his deputy Bucks County Cllr David Carroll from High Wycombe. The PCC will have powers of hire and fire, and control police budgets.

Buckingham Police Inspector Emma Garside reported that burglary of dwellings in Buckingham and surrounding villages between 1 April and 30 November this year had decreased, over the same period last year – from 39 down to 27. Criminal damage was down from 144-91 offences, and non-dwelling burglaries (including the raid on Buckingham NatWest) from 58 to 39.

But vehicle thefts had increased from 41 to 56 (including tractors and other agricultural vehicles), and shoplifting in Buckingham had increased from 32 to 44 cases, largely due to Romanian gangs (since apprehended) targeting the town. Overall crime was down from 856 to 639 reported offences. The police station has now moved to the industrial estate, but the Old Gaol police office remains open Monday to Friday from 10am to 2pm.

The Forum was addressed on Credit Unions, which are member-owned banks specifically helping those who are unable to get normal accounts or who have bad credit records. We heard that 10% of the population does not have bank accounts, and that in the MK18 area 6% are on benefits and 14% on low income. Run by volunteers, there has been a Credit Union in Milton Keynes since 2006, regulated in the same way as high street banks, offering 2% interest on savings to help people manage their money. It has now been extended to

MK18 and MK17, and volunteers are sought to run half-day weekly branches in village halls. You can see more on the local Credit union website, www.mkcreditunion.org.uk.

Mark Cole