

Thurlestone Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held in the Parish Hall, Thurlestone on Monday 9th September at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Rhymes (Chairman), Marshall, Munn, Williams, Crowther, Mitchelmore and Hurrell

In Attendance: Helen Nathanson (Parish Clerk); County Councillor Gilbert; District Councillors Long and Pearce; and 22 members of the public

- There was an open forum at the beginning of the meeting to allow members of the public to ask questions or make comment regarding the work of the Council or other items which affect the Parish. The following matters were raised:
- Dixons Quay – the application for a Modification Order of the Definitive Map to include a public right of way across the field by Aunecliff down to the quay has been submitted to DCC with 27 witness statements as evidence of its historical use. It is likely to take up to 4 years to determine the application because of the quantity of similar applications. County Councillor Gilbert agreed to look into the matter but made no promises because he is well aware of the workload in this area.
- Thurlestone Golf Club – the planning application for the Leasfoot Beach improvements has been approved and the works will take place later this year.
The application for the Lawful Development Certificate for existing use of car park by the public has been resubmitted.
- The area outside the school has been tidied and weeded for some years now by local residents, who prepare it for the new school year. They are now hoping that parents might be able to help out with this task and Councillor Williams agreed to look into this.
- The Bantham Community Wifi is up and running and in use. It will be more widely advertised once we can be satisfied that it is fully bedded in.
- Gigaclear – a decision will be publicised very soon.
- Residents of Valleyside, West Buckland, have all received notification from LiveWest Housing Association that the path leading to their car park needs to be repaired and that the residents are liable collectively for the cost. LiveWest has not divulged the cost of repairs but has offered to sell the path and the parking to the residents or to a third party (at a cost which residents cannot afford). Residents are concerned that they will be charged for works without any control over the costs or that they will lose valuable parking. It is also clear that some of the path has been lifted by trees owned by SHDC. The Parish Council was asked if it could help with this.
- Valleyside – concerns were raised by residents of Valleyside about building works and development at No 3 Valleyside. Councillors listened to the concerns and stated that they would look into the matter further.

The meeting convened to consider the following matters:

1. To receive apologies.

There were no apologies.

2. To receive any amendments necessary to Members' Registers of Interests.

There were no amendments.

3. To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 1st July 2019.
The minutes were confirmed and signed.

4. To consider any matters arising from the Minutes.
There were no matters arising.

5. Planning

- The planning decisions made in August were noted.
- The following planning applications were discussed:

2405/19/OPA Plot 29, Highfield, Thurlestone, TQ7 3NU

Outline application with all matters reserved for construction of single dwelling

Thurlestone Parish Council supported this application subject to conditions to deal with the new reserved matters deadline and on site parking, plus two conditions to comply with significant recent planning policy changes in the Thurlestone Neighbourhood Plan : (1) to limit the size of the property to 3 beds max (Policy TP4.1) and (2) to ensure occupancy as a principal residence (Policy TP6).

2522/19/CLE Thurlestone Golf Club, Thurlestone, TQ7 3NZ

Certificate of lawfulness for existing use of car park by the public (resubmission of 0427/19/CLE)

Thurlestone Parish Council supported this application subject to SHDC being satisfied that the relevant legal requirements have been met.

2687/19/HHO The Old Chapel, West Buckland, TQ7 3AH

Householder application for extension and alteration of converted former chapel

Thurlestone Parish Council objected to this application. The Old Chapel is located in a prominent elevated position at the crossroads in West Buckland, close to the West Buckland Conservation Area and within the South Devon AONB. The building is a local landmark, being a former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, with a strong community and historical association dating back to 1908. Whilst Councillors considered that the proposal would have a negligible impact on neighbouring residential amenity (Policy TP1.1), they considered that the style, scale and character of the proposal, which includes additional glazing on the South and West elevations comprising floor to ceiling glass doors and a triangular window in the roof apex for the new attic room, to be neither proportionate nor appropriate to its village location (Policy TP1.2), to the South Devon AONB (where proposals should conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB) (Policy TP1.5) and to the setting of the West Buckland Conservation Area. They also considered that the use of red-brown stained timber cladding would not be in keeping with the area (contrary to Policy TP1.2) and that the impact of light pollution from artificial light would be harmful upon local amenity, the intrinsically dark landscape and natural environment (contrary to Policy TP1.4).

2733/19/HHO Madron, Court Lane, Thurlestone, TQ7 3ND

Householder application for new extension, alterations and improvements to vehicular access (Resubmission of 1483/19/HHO)

Thurlestone Parish Council objected to this revised application. Councillors considered that the overall bulk and scale of the proposed dwelling had not been sufficiently reduced to address their objections to the original application (1483/19/HHO) and would still have: (1) an unacceptable overbearing and dominant impact on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties (Pilgrim Cottage and Dewerstone) (contrary to Policy TP1.1 of the Thurlestone Neighbourhood Plan). and (2) the scale of the proposed dwelling would be neither proportionate nor appropriate (contrary to Policy TP1.2). The height and bulk of the proposed first floor extension and the pitch of the replacement single-storey element (kitchen/utility area) on the South East elevation would still have an overbearing and dominant impact on Pilgrim Cottage, which is at a notably lower floor level to Madron, causing loss of light. Likewise, the height and pitch of the roof over the new games room extension on the North West elevation will still have an overbearing and dominant impact on Dewerstone, due to its close proximity to the boundary with Dewerstone. It is also understood that Madron has no mains drainage, contrary to the applicant's Design & Access Statement and Drainage Statement. This needs to be clarified, given that the proposed dwelling will have 5 WCs, 2 baths and 3 showers.

2811/19/PIP Bantham Garage, Thurlestone, Kingsbridge, TQ7 3LY
Permission in principle application for demolition of existing building and construction of 4no. houses

The Parish Council was made aware of this application, which had only just been submitted and for which comments are due before the next PC meeting (27th September 2019). It was agreed to hold a meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 1st October to agree comments.

- To receive an update about Community Led Housing

The Bantham Estate has not yet signed the Option Agreement but part of the delay is due to the Estate discovering belatedly that West Buckland Farmhouse had a lease over the site. In the event, the lease had been surrendered so the Agreement can now proceed once the Community Housing officer returns from leave.

Harrison Sutton architects are working on the concept design drawings for 6 houses – 4 x 3 bed and 2 x 2 bed houses. The drawings will be made available at the pre-application public consultation which it is anticipated will take place in late October.

As there will be no open market housing on the site, we are in a good position to qualify for the Homes England grant in addition to the Community Housing Fund which is currently being used to pay for the topographic and ecological surveys. The Homes England grant will pay for the infrastructure.

The site adjoining West Buckland remains SHDC's preferred site because it complies with their rural exception site policy in the Joint Local Plan. This requires the site to be adjoining or very near to an existing settlement.

The AONB Unit and Landscaping planners at SHDC are supportive of the scheme and consider that it will be a flagship project.

6. To receive a report from County Councillor Rufus Gilbert.

Councillor Gilbert met with the Bantham Estate to discuss issues relating to the Estate and DCC Highways has had a separate meeting with them too.

Parking enforcement increased in Bantham and other coastal sites over the summer and this seems to have had a positive impact.

There will be a road closure between West Buckland and East Buckland from 23 - 27th September and 30th September – 4th October.

The works on Edmeston Road are still in progress and are likely to continue for some time.

7. To receive reports from District Councillors Judy Pearce and Mark Long.

Councillor Long explained that Parish Councillor Planning training has been arranged for Tuesday 15th October and Tuesday 29th October from 7pm – 9.30pm in Marlborough Village Hall. All councillors are encouraged to attend.

August at SHDC was strongly focused on rubbish collection, toilet cleaning and dog bin emptying: these issues should all be better addressed in future. The problems with the dog litter bins in Thurlestone and West Buckland were raised and the PC requested proper bins to be installed.

Councillor Pearce explained that members have been discussing the considerable length of time it takes to determine planning applications. In view of this, a new system has been introduced in which applications will be turned around within the prescribed statutory limits, which in Thurlestone Parish is generally 8 weeks. This means that the statutory consultation 21-day period will be more strictly applied and it will no longer be possible to automatically obtain permission for an extension of time for a response. Councillors expressed concerns about this because it is not always practicably possible to provide comments within the timeframe. It was agreed to write to SHDC to express these concerns.

The SHDC Affordable Housing officer is investigating how housing associations in Thurlestone village deal with the allocation of our existing affordable rental stock and any evidence of under occupation. The objective is to see smaller homes allocated in order to free up larger ones for families. When this does not happen efficiently, housing often ends up being allocated to people from outside the parish.

8. To approve the Terms of Reference for the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

The Terms of Reference were approved and will be reviewed annually.

9. To discuss the handover of Thurlestone public toilets from SHDC. (Councillor Marshall)

Councillors Marshall and Munn met with SHDC to gather as much information as possible about the handover of the toilets. SHDC will close them at the end of September, after which they will remain closed unless the PC chooses to take them on. A decision therefore needs to be made in time for precept setting in January.

SHDC has recently carried out some necessary refurbishments to the building. The toilets are old but all is in working order. The cost of keeping the toilets open from March to October is estimated to be £4,198 (not including rates, which are no longer applicable). The breakdown is as follows: £1378 for general repairs and maintenance, which includes SHDC overheads such as transport); £469 for water; iro £2,000 for cleaning once a day throughout the week, with 2 deep cleans per annum; and £351 for energy use.

Councillors discussed how we might save on some of these costs by providing the services at a local level but it was still considered to be a large percentage of the annual precept. The toilets are, however, held to be an important asset and therefore important to retain. A meeting was held with Golf Club to ask them if they could contribute to or become involved in helping to run them and they agreed to discuss this and let the PC know the outcome.

The Chairman thanked councillors for the work they have put in to this and he proposed that we take them on and keep them open. It was resolved to make a final decision on this by the end of the year.

10. To discuss the installation of road safety signs in Bantham. (Councillor Williams)

In response to complaints about speeding in Bantham, councillors decided that they would like to install a few signs around the village, asking drivers to slow down. Children at the school had created a range of designs and it was agreed to have them made into large, hardwearing signs or posters. Councillor Gilbert has agreed to donate £200 from his Locality Budget towards the cost of this. Councillor Williams agreed to look into the cost of more substantial signs and a decision will then be made in October.

It was also agreed to speak to the Bantham Estate to make sure they are happy to have signs on Estate land.

11. To receive updates about Parish matters, including: Highways, Parish Hall, bins, trees.

There will be a DCC Highways Conference on Thursday 10th October 10am – 1pm at Rattery and all councillors are welcome to attend.

Grove Corner is overgrown – Bantham Estate to be contacted.

Glebe Field – DCC to be asked when resurfacing works will happen.

The Autumn Fair in the Parish Hall was a success and money was raised.

There are continuous complaints about the dog litter bin at the War Memorial, which is a general rubbish bin and not fit for purpose. District Councillors were asked for their support in having it swapped for a proper dog litter bin.

A request had been made from a member of the parish for a litter bin to be installed outside the shop in Thurlestone. Councillors discussed this but agreed that this has not been successful in the past and that they would not be requesting one.

12. To discuss a response to the consultation on the proposed closure of Kingston Fire Service.

Councillors agreed that this is an important service that they would not wish to lose. They will send individual responses to the consultation and a collective one from the PC.

13. To discuss the request from BT via SHDC to remove the payphones in Bantham and Thurlestone.

This was discussed and it was agreed to ask for the Bantham phone to be maintained on the grounds that there is a very poor signal throughout the village and there have been 44 phone calls during the year. It was agreed that the Thurlestone one can be closed.

14. To receive an update about the DAAT Night Landing Site.

The electricity connection has been set up with EDF. The supply will be at a lower standing charge of 25p per day with a cost of 16p per unit. There is an estimated 4-6 weeks' waiting time for connection and we need to have a meter box and dead test certificate prior to connection. Toby Russell at DAAT and landowner Geoffrey Stidston have been informed. Councillor Crowther to progress and liaise with the Clerk.

15. To note that SHDC is gathering bids for the Coastal Community Fund which is aimed at helping the local economy and that parishes are encouraged to submit possible projects.

Councillor Munn agreed to look into possibility of funding for the Avon Patrol Boat and will provide more information to the October meeting.

16. To discuss a request for the Parish Council to fund the refurbishment of the old telephone kiosk in Thurlestone. (Councillor Marshall)

Councillor Marshall explained that the interior is rusting around the window frames and needs repair. It is too much work for a volunteer so he requested a sum of £250 in order to carry out the work. Councillors discussed this and noted that there is a possibility that the glazing bars may be completely rusted away which will make this a much bigger job. Councillor Marshall will look into this.

District Councillors Pearce and Long offered up to £300 from their Locality funds if the work goes ahead.

17. To note the current account balance of £16,509.30 to date 20th August 2019 and to approve the following payments:

Bush Broadband	Community WiFi Project	£1,699
Sue Crowther	NPC Expenses	£78.41
Thurlestone Parish Hall	Hall Hire	£60
Paul Martin	Refurbishment of Cannon	£35.15
	Purchase of parish lawnmower	£30
Helen Nathanson	Parish Clerk pay and expenses May - Sep	£1,147.80
Julian Lee	Grass cutting and strimming – Jul/Aug	£430
Total		£3,480.36

The balance was noted and the payments were approved to a total of £3,480.36.

18. To note the date of the next Council Meeting: Monday 7th October 2019 at 7.30pm.

This was noted and the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Councillor Rhymes
Chairman