

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, THORNE ON TUESDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 7.00PM.

Present: Cllr. R. Walker (Chair)

Cllrs. D.Barton, A.Brookes, S J.Durant, M. Hennessey, M.Houlbrook, R.Porter, J.E. Phillips, K.Redmile, R.Turner, M.Williams.

There were twelve members of the public present.

2786. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Cllr. J.Blackham - Holiday

Cllr. C.Blackham - Holiday

Cllr. J.Parker – Illness

RESOLVED: That the apologies be accepted.

2787. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllr. R.Walker declared an interest in planning item (ix) and would hand the Chair to Cllr.

Barton. Cllr. S.Durant declared a non-pecuniary interest in all planning items as a DMBC Councillor and agenda item 14 where she would leave the room, as her brother is an interested party in purchasing the building.

2788. MINUTES

Consideration was given to signing the minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday 14th July 2015, pages 4250 – 4255.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be signed.

2789. MATTERS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC

Mr B.Armitage said that he had asked for two items to be put on the Agenda wanted to know why they hadn't been. The Clerk replied that Mr Armitage's question regarding the Cemetery was an operational matter and would be dealt with as such. The other item regarding complaints on Member's behaviour the Clerk suggested contacting the Standards Board at Doncaster MBC. Mr Armitage said that matters should not have to go further and should be resolved behind closed doors. The Clerk advised that there is a process which he will explain to any member of the public who asks.

Ms. R.Durant referred to the item regarding repairs to the Mayor's Chain, saying that when she became Mayor the Chain was broken but had not been repaired, the chain was returned in the same condition as it had been received. Ms Durant said that she took exception to the accusations of the current Mayor and requested an apology.

The Clerk said that he couldn't recall the details but said that he understood that Canterbury House could not repair it at that point. It was agreed that the jeweller's opinion had been accepted.

Cllr. K. Redmile joined the meeting at 7.13pm.

Mr Timmins expressed an interest in the Winning Post Centre as he represented three groups who use the building. He said they found it an ideal venue and urged the Council to keep it.

Cllr. M. Houlbrook joined the meeting at 7.16pm

Mrs A.Farrand asked about Social Media, particularly Facebook, and why despite the Council issuing guidelines into its usage by Councillors making personal comments on fellow Councillors, she asked for an apology from Cllr. Hennessey. Cllr. Hennessey said that any comments had been written on his personal site.

The Mayor asked the Town Clerk to write to all Councillors asking them to refrain from using Facebook and reiterate Council policy.

A representative of the Pre-School Group who had just moved into the Winning Post said that it would be a shame if it closed after all the work they had carried out to open their business.

Mr Armitage asked if the Winning Post had been sold and was told it had not. He asked if a For Sale sign was going to be put outside it and was advised that there would be no sign.

The Clerk said that the Council were required by Local Government Act to get best value for the building.

2790. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**i) 15/01531/FUL**

Erection of porch extension to front of semi-detached house at 18 Gainford Road, Moorends for Mr P.Robson.

This application had already been approved

ii) 15/01659/FUL

Erection of single storey pitched roof extension to side and single storey pitched roof extension to rear of semi-detached house, following demolition of existing conservatory (Be resubmission of application refused under ref: 13/00762/FULFT on 25.06.2013). (Being Removal of Condition 3 of application granted under ref: 13/01566/FULFT on 04.09.13 – Garage Door) at 7A Henry Court for Mr G. Cawkwell.

RESOLVED: No observations.

iii) 15/01677/FUL

Installation of 1.20m high fencing at Darlington Walk, Darlington Grove, Moorends, Doncaster for Doncaster MBC.

RESOLVED: No observations.

iv) 15/01684/FUL

Erection of detached dormer bungalow and detached garage at 113 Klrton Lane, Thorne for Mr Hill.

RESOLVED: No observations.

v) 15/01793/FUL

Erection of single storey extension to side of club house and formation of disabled access at Thornensians RUFC, Church Balk, Thorne, Doncaster for Thornensians RUFC.

RESOLVED: No observations.

vi) 15/01719/FUL

Erection of detached dwelling on approx 0.04ha of land (Retrospective) at Lock House, Union Road, Thorne for Mr R. Clarke.

RESOLVED: No observations.

vii) 15/01970/FULFT

Erection of single storey pitched roof extension to side and first floor pitched roof extension to rear of semi detached house at 9 Beech Tree Avenue, Thorne for Mr J. Eldridge.

RESOLVED: No observations.

viii) 15/00015/FULM

Erection of 7 houses on approx. 0.2ha of land following demolition of existing factory (Amended Plans) at Component Packing Limited, Kyle Works, King Edward Road, Thorne for Mr A. McClenning.

RESOLVED: That in view of the improvements made to the revised application the previous objections be withdrawn.

At this point Cllr. D.Barton took the Chair.

ix) 15/01584/FULM

Erection of 14 dwellings following demolition of public house and buildings on approx. 0.48 ha of land (amended plans received) on Land Off Site of former Rising Sun Public House, Hatfield Road, Thorne for Mr N. Walker.

Councillors noted that this was the third time that this application had come before the Council. The Clerk recommended that previous comments be reconfirmed.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk reconfirm previous comments with the addition of the observation that there would be an increase in the volume of traffic.

Cllr. Walker took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

x) 15/00360/FULM

Residential development comprising 14 semi-detached houses on approx. 0.33 ha of land (amended plans received) on Open Land at Corona Drive, Thorne for Portward Homes Ltd.

RESOLVED: No observations.

2791. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Consideration was given to the Accounts Payable for Month 4 of the current financial year.

RESOLVED: That the accounts payable be approved.

2792. FINANCIAL REPORT

Consideration was given to the financial report to the end of month 4.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

2793. ANNUAL RETURN

It was reported that the annual Audit had been completed with the Annual Return being signed off by the External Auditor. The External Auditor had advised the Annual Return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters give cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted, and the Clerk and Finance staff be commended for their work.

2794. RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Clerk reported that there is an audit requirement that Town and Parish Councils undertake an annual risk assessment of its activities. This is also good practice.

The Clerk advised that the overall risk assessment has been produced using software which has been designed specifically for use by Town and Parish Councils. It is a high level review of the overall risk to the Council rather than more detailed consideration of individual activities. There is considerably more detail behind each of the categories in the summary report. This information can be provided on request.

As with most Risk Assessment this requires the scoring of risks on the basis of likelihood and impact allowing for any mitigation measures that are in place. This requires an element of judgment and is not an exact science. This does however provide a picture of where there is the greatest potential for risks to the Council which on the whole are in public areas where there is third party activity.

The Risk Assessment has been rolled forward from the 2014-15 assessment. There is no significant change to this assessment.

The scoring system has identified a number of areas that are described as “uncontrolled” which are worth considering in more detail.

The main uncontrolled risk is vandalism which is identified for the Allotments, Cemetery, Community Centres, Land, Open Spaces, Public Conveniences, and the Skatepark. Mitigation measures include security alarms, gates and fencing, CCTV and Insurance. However it is difficult to see how the likelihood or impact can be lower than medium, particularly as the impact is not just financial, but also wastes staff time, and can disrupt user activities.

Other uncontrolled risks relate to specific areas as follows:

Cemetery – security of Cemetery and Buildings – this mainly relates to recurring issue of theft and damage to personal items on graves. These tend to be of low financial value, but are personal items which cause distress to families. A number of mitigation measures are in place. The Cemetery is locked at night, staff are present for much of the day, additional patrols have been requested, and incidents are reported to the Police when the Council is advised of them. Despite this incidents have continued. The Cemetery is a large site that needs to maintain daytime public access. Despite locking the site, the fence is climbable, and evening trespass continues. One issue is that the Council is often advised of these issues third hand or sometime after the event.

Open Spaces – Fly Tipping – this is fortunately a fairly rare occurrence, but can be high risk. The main mitigation measure is to limit the ability of vehicles to access Council sites. One example was the tipping of asbestos waste at Thorne Community Wood. There is also a tendency for people to leave bags of domestic waste for reasons that are not clear.

Skatepark – Personal Injury – the Skatepark is regularly inspected and repairs undertaken immediately when necessary. However the nature of skatepark activity inevitably creates an injury risk which cannot be fully mitigated. However the programme of inspections etc should limit any liability that the Council may have, and the site is covered by the councils Insurance.

The financial Risk Assessment has also been rolled forward from the Assessment reviewed last year. There have been no substantial changes, and the lack of Audit comment provides positive evidence that the Assessment is realistic.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council Risk Assessment and Financial Risk Assessment be approved.

2795. DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN

The most recent comprehensive plan for Doncaster Borough is the Unitary Development Plan which was approved in 1998. Doncaster MBC started the process of replacing this Plan with the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy in 2012. This set out the high level policies for the Borough, and did not include site allocations. A Sites and Policies Plan was prepared to provide this additional detail, but this was withdrawn during the Examination following comments by the Inspector.

One of the issues that caused the withdrawal was that the data in the Core Strategy became out of date by the time the Sites and Policies Plan was prepared. Doncaster MBC have now decided to produce a Local Plan which will include both high level policies and site specific allocations.

The Thorne and Moorends Neighbourhood Plan will form an insert into the Local Plan providing additional and reinforced policies.

Doncaster MBC have prepared 2 documents which form an initial phase of their Local Plan preparation and consultation. These documents are the “Vision, Aims and Objectives” and “Issues and Options”. These have previously been circulated to the Councillors. The deadline for comments on these documents is 7th September. These need to be returned using an online form.

The Clerk said that he had prepared comments (below in italics) on these documents that are relevant to Thorne and Moorends. To assist he had consulted the Neighbourhood Plan sub Group. Overall the documents are generally in line with the approved Core Strategy which the Town Council has largely supported previously.

Vision, Aims and Objectives

This consists of a vision, a series of aims, and information about how these have been developed:

Vision

“Doncaster aims to be one of most successful boroughs in England and a gateway to opportunity locally, nationally and worldwide. The Doncaster Local Plan will contribute to the achievement of this vision. In particular, it will enable Doncaster to be:

- an important economic hub between the coastal ports and city regions such as Sheffield, Leeds and Manchester at a key gateway into the north of England;
- performing well compared to other places in terms of its economy and quality of life, including health and recreation;
- a more distinctive and attractive place with better facilities and links between towns, villages and places of interest, helping to boost civic pride;

- a leading centre in logistics, rail engineering, aviation, energy and construction, centred around the motorways, airport and Doncaster town centre;
- a centre of excellence at the forefront of efforts to combat climate change and reduce carbon emissions; and
- known nationally for the quality of its tourist attractions and greenspaces, including its nature reserves and railway heritage.”

Aims

Aim 1: Jobs and growth

Support the conditions and opportunities for attracting high quality inward investment and jobs including green and high-tech industries and other innovative sectors that will help grow and diversify Doncaster’s economy and support its role as a sub-regional centre

Aim 2: Regeneration and community pride

Support regeneration in all our communities to tackle deprivation and promote civic pride

Aim 3: Quality of place

Make sure that our towns, suburbs, villages and countryside benefit from high quality development that reinforce distinctive and vibrant places and conserve the built and natural heritage

Aim 4: Natural environment and countryside

Maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the countryside and the natural environment, including areas of landscape and biodiversity value

Aim 5: Energy and climate change

Support the transition to a low carbon borough in a way that reduces emissions and energy use, combats the impacts of climate change and exploits its natural resources, such as energy, water and minerals

Aim 6: Transport and movement

Improve travel choice within the borough and to the wider city region and beyond to address congestion, improve journey times and improve access to services and jobs, especially by accessible public transport, cycling and walking links

Aim 7: Homes and communities Increase the provision of new homes throughout the borough to meet future needs and create mixed and balanced communities, particularly in areas with access to existing services

The Vision and Aims are in line with the approach previously agreed by the Town Council, and with the issues and emerging policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council are happy to support this document.

Issues and options

This raises a number of questions about the policies and allocations that will be developed in the Plan.

Q1 In general terms, where should new homes be provided in Doncaster? – this provides a number of options. The most appropriate for Thorne and Moorends is option c “the larger and more sustainable towns and villages should have proportionally more new homes because they

have better services and facilities” and option e “brownfield sites... should be prioritised for the development of new homes”

Q2 Where more specifically should new homes be built? – largely answered by use of option c above

Q3 Where should new employment opportunities be provided? – this provides 6 options. The most relevant is “It is acceptable for some jobs to be provided at locations that are less suitable for new homes provided good transport links are in place” with the rider that sites should form extensions to urban areas, rather than being sited in open countryside. An additional comment is that opportunities should be available for local small scale businesses to invest and create local employment, which relates to both Thorne and Moorends. Policies should be included to restrict businesses that utilise hazardous chemicals from sites that are close to housing or retail sites.

Q4 relates to review of the Green Belt which only covers the west of the Borough, therefore not relevant. It is important to retain the Countryside Policy Area in the east of the Borough to prevent unnecessary sprawl, and to protect the setting of the Moors, though its boundary will also need to be reviewed.

Q5 To what extent should development avoid flood risk areas? – the following option should be supported: “It is acceptable to use Brownfield and other well-located urban centre sites in flood risk areas provided existing or proposed flood defences/mitigation measures would make the development safe.” Any blanket policy preventing development in Flood Zone 3 areas would result in the slow decline of Thorne and Moorends as there would be few opportunities for new homes and businesses. A sensible and reasonable approach to flood risk management is needed which achieves an appropriate balance between the risk and the need to encourage investment in areas in need of regeneration.

Q6 How can we best protect, maintain and improve Doncaster town centres? – a variety of options are included. Support should be given to mixed use town centre development. I do not feel that a blanket opposition to out of town development is appropriate given the lack of town centre opportunities. However it should be opposed if it is likely to have a significant detrimental impact of the town centre.

Q7 What approach should be taken to developing a hierarchy of town, district and local centres across the borough? – Thorne is identified as a Town Centre, and Moorends as a local centre which seems reasonable, and can provide an element of protection. Both these centres should be promoted as appropriate for investment. I see little benefit in naming local shopping parades.

Q8 How can the borough become more accessible and better connected to other places? – a variety of transport related issues. Many of the transport issues raised in the Neighbourhood Plan consultation are not planning issues. However the following can be raised:

Improved accessibility to local public transport

Improved links and parking at the stations

Provision for a Station at Moorends

Adequate town centre parking

Ensuring appropriate routes for heavy vehicles accessing new developments

Provision of Lorry Parking

Q9 How should we ensure enough minerals are available for development and also protect resources for the future? – no comment

Q10 How should we best meet specialist housing needs? – consideration of gypsies and travellers, affordable homes, houses in multiple accommodation, and student accommodation. The main issues are the gypsies and travellers where Thorne and Moorends already have significant provision, and new provision should be limited to ensure there is an appropriate local balance. Affordable housing should be considered on a site by site basis, subject to development viability as there is a need to support the development of a broader housing mix.

The document also offers 3 options for the broad relocation of new growth:

Business as Usual

Doncaster and Main Towns

Greater dispersal

Growth in Thorne and Moorends is similar for all these options. Option 1 actively supports development and investment in Thorne and Moorends, so is supported.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk submit the above comments on the consultation document.

2796. RENAMING OF THORNE COMMUNITY WOODLAND

At Policy and Resources Committee on 27th January 2015 it was agreed to rename the Council owned Local Nature Reserve to “Thorne Community Woodland”. This name had been proposed by the “Friends of” group.

The new name is now being used for all practical purposes. However this report considers the formal steps needed to officially change the Nature Reserve designation and byelaws. This has been discussed in detail with Natural England and Doncaster MBC.

Three options have been considered:

1. Thorne-Moorends Town Council/ Friends of Group informally change the name, so that Buntings Wood becomes known as Thorne Community Woodland, but legally, the name of the LNR remains Buntings Wood. Notices could give the new name in large letters but with a footnote saying that legally the name remains Buntings Wood and that the Buntings Wood byelaws continue to apply. Provided this is done, the existing byelaws should not become unenforceable, though it is for the Town Council to ensure people are not misled or confused. When/if the Council next amends the byelaws it could at that time both seek to make a formal name change of the LNR in consultation with Natural England as well as the byelaws upon confirmation with the Secretary of State. This is the situation at the moment. It would mean that the former name remains on all documents which is not the intention of the original decision.
2. Thorne-Moorends Council formally and legally change the name of the LNR - the Council could make a ‘change of name by deed’. As the LNR byelaws cannot be amended, Council would need to revoke them and then make new byelaws, following the standard process through Defra (and in consultation with Natural England and others). Through this process the Council would need to seek confirmation of the new byelaws by the Secretary of State.

However neither Doncaster MBC nor Thorne-Moorends Town Council have any record of a delegation of powers from Doncaster MBC to Thorne-Moorends PC relating to the declaration. In addition a substantial part of the LNR lies within Stainforth Parish. There are also two areas of the LNR which were not in Town Council ownership – one relating to

agricultural land which the owner wishes to graze, and one relating to land adjacent to the railway line that has no registered title.

3. The LNR to be de-declared by Thorne Town Council and re-declared by Doncaster MBC. As Doncaster is the local authority for both Thorne-Moorends TC and Stainforth PC this would avoid the need for a joint declaration between Thorne- Moorends and Stainforth Councils. However, the declaring local authority will need to have a legal interest in the LNR, and as Thorne Town Council owns most of the LNR, Doncaster MBC would need to enter into a joint nature reserve management agreement with Thorne Town Council and with any other owners for the management of the reserve. The agreement will need to comply with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, section 7. We would expect that Doncaster MBC would need to consult with Stainforth Parish Council, regarding the LNR land lying within Stainforth's jurisdiction and the proposed delegation by Doncaster of their LNR powers to Thorne-Moorends Council.

Due to the issues identified in option b with the original designation, option 3 is the most straightforward way to proceed as it would avoid the need for agreements with both Doncaster and Stainforth. In addition, Doncaster MBC would do some of the work. As a boundary change is needed this would be a new designation rather than just a re-naming.

For this option, the Town Council will need to revoke the byelaws and new byelaws will need to be made and confirmation applied for to the Secretary of State for Defra. This should be done on the same day.

The Clerk said he that had done some further investigation with regard to the 2 sites referred to above that are not in Town Council ownership. Owners consent is needed for these sites to be included:

- a. Grazing Land – this has recently been marketed. I have spoken with the agent with regard to the owner agreeing to this being part of the LNR, but have not yet had a response.
- b. Land next to Railway and Canal – I have contacted Network Rail and the Canal and River Trust and they have confirmed that they do not own this land. It seems likely that ownership is unknown, so this land could potentially be included within the LNR.

RESOLVED That:

1. **The Local Nature Reserve be de-declared by Thorne Town Council and re-declared by Doncaster MBC as Thorne Community Wood**
2. **The Town Council revoke the byelaws and new byelaws made and confirmation applied for to the Secretary of State for Defra. This should be done on the same day.**
3. **The Clerk be given delegated authority to determine the final boundary**
4. **Councillors be authorised to sign the relevant legal documentation.**

2797. MAYORAL CHAIN

The Mayor has advised of some damage to the Mayoral Chain and case when he received it this year. The damage and cost is as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------|
| a. Re-mount badge | £112.50 |
| b. Replacement case | £400.00 |

As it needs to be sent away for repair the opportunity has been taken for it to be cleaned and refurbished at a cost of £810.00.

In recent years the Mayoral Chains are handed over at the Annual Meeting, so are not inspected by the Clerk. It is therefore proposed that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's chains are returned to the Clerk in advance of the meeting so that they are inspected at least once a year.

RESOLVED: That the Mayor and Deputy Mayor Chains be returned to the Clerk at least 1 week in advance of the Annual Meeting.

2798. STANDING ORDER 1C – ADMISSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Consideration was given to the implementation of Standing Order 1C (exclusion of press and public) in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 1C be invoked due to consideration of a confidential matter.

All public and press left the meeting as did Cllr. S. Durant.

2799. WINNING POST

The Clerk reported that he had received unsolicited written offers to purchase the Winning Post. He said that the Council needed to consider what action to take regarding them and the future of the building. A report was circulated considering the offers and the implications on the building and its users should the Council be minded to consider the disposal of the building.

The Winning Post is a substantial building which was built as a public house around the 1930's. As well as a bar area it was built with a large function room and landlords accommodation. It was acquired by the Council in 1996. The ground floor was converted into multi use community space including:

- Large Community Hall
- Community Room
- Youth Club
- Small offices
- Caretaker's flat

Users of this space have included the Health Authority, Memory Group, and the Community Radio. The outside gardens were developed as community gardening projects, but these have now ceased.

In 1998 the first floor was let to Yorkshire Housing Association for a 30 year term at a peppercorn rent. This lease can be extended by the Housing Association for 2 further 5 year terms. The Housing Association have converted this area to 6 flats. The lease gives them responsibility for the internal and external repair and maintenance of this part of the building.

Finance

Income and expenditure position since 2011 was discussed.

	Income	Expenditure	Net
2011-12	£19,842	£53,354	-£33,512
2012-13	£18,434	£51,861	-£33,427
2013-14	£18,391	£37,743	-£19,352
2014-15	£16,693	£58,426	-£41,733
2015-16 (budget)	£16,000	£50,000	-£34,000

The fall in income has resulted from the reduction in usage. The variation in expenditure is mainly due to repairs and maintenance costs. The Clerk reported that the budgeted deficit for 2015-16 represents nearly 10% of the precept.

Community Buildings' Review

The future of the Winning Post was part of the discussions of the Community Buildings Sub Group. As part of this process the building was valued on the basis of vacant possession and redevelopment, and given a value of £150,000 (2013). The Housing Association were approached regarding the cost of relinquishing their lease and they indicated that this would cost around £210,000 (2014). The value of this lease will drop as the lease term progresses.

Current Situation

The building is in basically sound condition. Works have been carried out in recent years to deal with some basic problems including the fire alarm, roofing, and new boiler and damp proofing to toilets and the caretakers flat. Further significant repair works are inevitable on a building of this scale.

Current space and usage is as follows:

- Community Hall, bar area and stage – c179m² – currently used by around 9 sessions per week on a casual hire basis
- Community Room, office and kitchen – c64 m² – term time hire to a day nursery.
- Youth Club (irregularly shaped room with offices) – used by the youth club twice a week
- 3 offices – not used
- Flat – leased to the Caretaker

There are 3 sets of toilets and a number of corridors.

One of the garden areas is being used by the Day Nursery, and there is a garden that forms part of the Caretaker's flat.

Consideration of premises Issues should the sale proceed

Existing users:

- Youth Club – lease a portion of the building for their exclusive use. There is significant doubt regarding the continuation of this lease as they have been considering alternative options. There are no obvious alternative premises in Moorends.
- Nursery – have a 12 month hire agreement to 31.8.16 which would need to be honoured by any new freeholder. This is for the term time use of the front meeting room.
- Main hall hire – the main hall is typically hired for 9 sessions per week totalling around 33 hours. The vast majority of these are regular long-term users. On the basis of current timetables at least 5 of these sessions could be accommodated at the Community Centre (where there are now 2 available rooms).

The Clerk said that any decision to dispose of the building would cause difficulty and uncertainty for existing users and recommend that the Council consults with them with regard to the changes and the potential to find alternative accommodation.

Caretaker – the position of the current Caretaker was discussed and the implications to her If the building is sold. Whilst the Caretaker carries out the majority of her work at the Winning Post she does do work on other sites and provides cover for the other community buildings. In

addition other buildings (notably Coulman Road and the Assembly Rooms) would benefit from being cleaned more frequently.

Flats – if the building is sold the lease on the first floor flats will pass to the new freeholder and would remain unchanged.

Benefits and Disadvantages of disposal

It is appropriate to use precept funding to support local community facilities. The Winning Post has been a valuable community facility since it was acquired in 1996. Its closure as a community building would cause difficulties for current users and would reduce facilities available in Moorends.

The building is large and a number of parts receive little use. At one stage there was a possibility that only the Main Hall would remain in use, but the attraction of the Day Nursery, and the current retention of the Youth Club have ensured that it receives broader usage. Notwithstanding this it is typically costing the precept payer in excess of £30K per year, which is around 10% of the precept. This compares with a current net budget cost of £8,000 at the Community Centre, and £6,950 at Coulman Pavilion. Any savings could be used to reduce the pressure on the precept and invest in other community buildings.

The building is most suited to a multi-use community building as it has a number of distinctive areas and small rooms suitable for counselling sessions etc. However demand for this type of use has fallen as funding has become more restricted.

The building was not designed for community use leading to inefficiencies in layout (most notably corridor space). It is poorly insulated, leading to high utility bills. Recent investment has ensured that the building is maintained rather than enhanced.

Consideration of Offers Received

Should the Council dispose of the building they would have to achieve “best value”. This is not necessarily best price, and the Council is not required to formally tender of market the building. The Council would need to formally record how it has assessed “best value”.

Should the Council agree in principle to the disposal of the building the Clerk said he would recommend appointing an agent to advise the Council and to undertake a marketing exercise. This would demonstrate that the approach taken has been independent and transparent. Marketing should be principally local, and interested parties should be given a deadline so that bids can be assessed at the next Council meeting. Information should be sought regarding intended future use as well as price.

RESOLVED that:

1. **The Clerk be authorised to invite bids for the disposal of the Winning Post for consideration at a future Council meeting**
2. **A commercial agent be appointed to advise the Council and to undertake the building marketing.**
3. **The Clerk consult with current regular users of the building and report back to the Council.**
4. **The Staffing Issues be referred to the Staffing sub group for further consideration.**
5. **That consultation be carried out with the people of Thorne and Moorends as to the future of the Winning Post.**

End of meeting