

MINUTES OF THE THORNE MOORENDS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2021 at 7.00pm at Coulman Road Pavilion, Coulman Road, Thorne

Present: Councillors Craig Ellis (Mayor), Susan Durant (Deputy Mayor), Ron Powell, Janet Phillips, Mark Houlbrook, Robert Porter, Keith Fox, Shane Sweeting, Gwyn Ap Harri, Joe Blackham

In Attendance: X 1 member of the public, x1 member of the press

**3745. APOLOGIES**

Apologies noted as received from the following Councillors:

Mark Phillips  
Carol Blackham  
Nicola Etherington  
Allan Cuttall  
Martin Williams

**RESOLVED** that the apologies and reasons given be noted.

**3746. DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE AND REASONS GIVEN**

The Deputy Mayor declared an interest in the Planning matters as she is on the Planning Committee at Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC).

**3747. MINUTES**

The council considered the report of the extraordinary meeting held on the 27 July 2021.

**RESOLVED** to accept as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2021.

**3748. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

No questions were raised by members of the public.

**3749. FINANCIAL REPORT**

The RFO had provided a balance sheet, monthly payment schedule, credit card report and bank reconciliation report. Councillors raised a number of questions and queries which the RFO answered.

**RESOLVED** that :

- i) The balance sheet is noted.
- ii) The payment schedule is approved and quotes are sought for new accountancy support.
- iii) The credit card report is noted.
- iv) The bank reconciliation report is noted.

**3750. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Mayor updated that there were 3 minor applications for consideration.

**RESOLVED** that the planning applications be noted.

### 3751. BUDGET FOR 2022 / 2023 FINANCIAL YEAR

Members started early debate and discussions around the budget and precept for the 2022/2023 financial year.

It was noted that the cost of living increases have to be taken into account, that people are getting poorer and that wherever possible the Council should do its best to avoid adding to the burden. At the same time it was recognised that Council also has rising costs and area of expense that are unavoidable.

It was understood that certain aspirational projects may not be possible immediately in order to manage potential precept increases.

The Mayor reported on certain projects that have been identified such as cemetery footpath surfacing for which a cost of over £60,000 has been identified.

It was recognised that this is the first stage of budget planning and that more detail will follow.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk should look at budgets that demonstrate what is possible with precept increases of between 1% and 3%.

### 3752. CEMETERY MINI DIGGER

The Clerk noted he had omitted the schedule of quotes for a new mini digger from the agenda packs for which he offered sincere apologies.

The Clerk explained the content of the report to members and the merits of the different options that council had asked the Clerk to look at.

Noted that due to the constraints of electric and hybrid technology only another Diesel digger would suffice.

Noted that the existing digger had done 24000 hours approx. over 19 years averaging 25 hours per week and based on the cost of a new machine this equated to around £1.00 per hour for use of a mini digger.

It was reported that an offer of £2,500 had been made as a part exchange for the Councils existing but broken mini digger which would offset some of the cost of a new digger which is £23,500.00.

**RESOLVED** to purchase a new JCB Gravemaster being the same model as the existing machine and to part exchange the existing machine for £2500.00.

### 3753. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

Members noted the Clerks report and the contents of the audit returns. Questions were raised regarding some of the content, in particular the AGAR having to be have been corrected which the Clerk explained had been due to a typo in the figures from the accountant. Otherwise members were happy with the audit situation.

**RESOLVED** to note the internal and external audit reports.

## 3754. ASB AND VANDALISM

Members were informed of the recent vandalism at Moorends recreation ground play area and considered possible options to try and deal with it.

It was noted that lighting in the area needs repairing. The Clerk confirmed this is something Lisa is working on.

It was noted that CCTV is not fully the answer but that investigating the latest and best technology would be a good idea. The difficulties with certain families and children of those families was identified and recognition that as fast as one group of troublesome kids is dealt with, moves away or grows older another group of kids will soon replace them.

Noted that efforts with the local school to seek their help had not been terribly fruitful.

Options for fencing and security were considered however as issues had occurred recently in the day time that fencing and locked gates at night would not address issues during the day.

The Clerk reported that repair costs could easily be circa £20,000 for which council agreed the £300.00 excess on the insurance was justified.

It was generally accepted that it is sad that these issue occur but that there are no easy and obvious answers to prevent them.

**RESOLVED** to claim on insurance for the damage caused, ensure that details of the repair costs and repair work are well publicised.

## 3755. COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING AT THORNE MEMORIAL PARK

It was accepted by all members that using the park fencing for commercial advertising was inappropriate due to the location being a conservation area.

**RESOLVED** to reject the request to use the park fencing as a space for siting commercial advertising banners.

## 3756. EXTERNAL BODY UPDATES

Updates were provided from Cllr. Durant and Cllr. Janet Phillips as to the groups they are involved in. Cllr. Ellis reported on behalf of Cllr. Mark Phillips in respect of the angling club. All other councillors concerned reported that they had not been invited to any meetings.

**RESOLVED** to note the reports and for the Clerk to contact the organisations that had not been in touch to remind them of their Council representative.

## 3757. CEMETERY CLOSING ARRANGEMENTS

Members noted and discussed the Clerks report. There was lengthy debate about how best to set closing times for the cemetery. It was widely agreed that 'dusk' as a closing time is too ambiguous. It was noted that Council may have previously agreed set closing times but that they appear not to have been enacted.

It was recognised how hard it is to have a simple approach to closing times due to the varied sunset times.

It was noted that problems involving people being locked in are infrequent and a common sense approach is necessary.

**RESOLVED** for the Clerk to assess and set appropriate closing times and agree arrangements with the staff which will include ensuring they are on site 15 minutes before closing to ensure the site is cleared of visitors.

#### 3758. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Clerk reported that he had reviewed the regulations and did feel that there is any content that need any change save for the addition of wording to allow for payments to sole traders as set out in report.

Members asked for an addition to the proposed wording that ensures that works are appropriately checked before payment is made.

**RESOLVED** to adopt the financial regulations without amendment other than the addition of the Clerks proposed wording covering payments to sole traders which will include the need to check works are satisfactory before payment.

#### 3759. VE DAY EVENT 2022

The Clerks report was notes as to the previously allocated funds for VE Day 2020 which did not proceed due to Covid 19.

Cllr. Durant requested the full £5,000 previously allocated to be used for an event in Moorends on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022.

**RESOLVED** to confirm £5,000 as the budget for the Moorends event on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022.

#### 3760. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED:**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the remaining business to be transacted.

#### 3761. STAFFING

**RESOLVED** that the grievance received be immediately reported to and made subject for the attention of the staffing and complaints committee on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

In light of the comments made by Julie Brookes who heard the grievance, in relation to the comments regarding job descriptions, roles and duties and to the report received from Phil Parkin at this meeting, that the council revisit the quote received from Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd who quoted to provide a review and evaluation of the councils staff and organisational structure in March 2021 and to ask Personnel Advice and Solutions Ltd to attend the staffing and complaints meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November in pursuit of commissioning them to undertake the work they quoted for in March 2021.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm