



Thurcroft Parish Council

Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall, Green Arbour
Road, Thurcroft, Rotherham, S66 9DD

e: clerk@thurcroftparishcouncil.gov.uk

w: thurcroftparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the Full Council meeting held Thursday 17th November 2022

Present Councillors: **D. Andrews (Chair), A. Copeland (Vice), D. Brown, D. Fretwell, E. Humphreys, C. McCartan, T. Murphy, D. Oxley, C. Walker.**

Apologies were received from Councillors: **C. Alsop, M. Belcher, P. Owen, J Ronksley, N. Ronksley, A. Scott, A. Winsborough.**

Absent: **M. Howis**

There was one member of the public in attendance.

The meeting started at 6.30pm

9222 To receive and approve reasons for absence.

Resolved:- The council received and approved the reasons for absence from C. Alsop, M. Belcher, P. Owen, J. Ronksley, N. Ronksley, A. Scott, A. Winsborough.

9223 To receive declarations of interest in respect of business on the agenda.

Resolved:- There were declarations received for Item 9233 relating to Thurcroft Veterans from A. Copeland and D. Fretwell.

9224 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 27th October 2022.

C. Walker asked if the Quarterly Payment was investigated. The Clerk confirmed that both invoices were correct and related to two different locations.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held **Thursday 27th October 2022** be approved and file copy was signed by the chairperson of the meeting.

9225 To identify any agenda items which may be considered following the exclusion of the press and public, due to the confidential nature to be discussed.

Resolved:- One item on the agenda was discussed in closed session – Agenda Item 14 (Minute note 9235)

9226 Public Participation Session

The Council received 4 questions from members of the public.



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Question 1. Is there any rational explanation for the excessive amount of money carried forward at the end of the Financial Year 2021/22? At £1,031,819 this figure is over £400,000 more than money carried over by any other Parish Council in the Borough. In the absence of a reasonable explanation, it would seem to be a rather questionable use of public funds.

In the meeting held in August 2022 it was revealed to the Council the amount held in the Reserves. Councillors had not previously been able to see any financial information and were unaware of the amounts held in each reserve allocation.

As part of the budget setting in this meeting, we will be reviewing the allocated reserves, and developing a plan to draw down the reserves in line with other council's whilst keeping a general reserve fund in case of emergencies.

Question 2. Does the Parish Council have a Reserves Policy? Given the amount of money carried forward this year it would seem a logical action to adopt a Reserves Policy to provide some guidance for future planning by detailing a policy for General Reserves, Allocated Reserves, Unallocated Reserves and any Restricted Reserves.

There is currently no Reserves Policy adopted by Thurcroft Parish Council but your comments have been noted.

Question 3. Is there an explanation for the discrepancy in the value of the assets detailed in the Asset Register - total £ 884,404 and the amount listed under fixed assets on AGAR - total £ 614,823.

The Asset Register included on the website is a document from 4th June 2021. Since then there have been two AGAR audits completed which have published the fixed asset amount for £614,823.

Unfortunately, I am unable to answer why these amounts have been declared differently. However, your comments have been noted to ensure that we can pick this up in future audits and ensure a correct amount is declared.

Question 4. Would it be possible for the Parish Council to consider increasing the maximum amount which can be issued in the form of a grant from £500?



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This has already been considered by the Clerk and RFO in the budget setting for next year to increase the Grant Award funding to an annual budget of £2000. The maximum grant funding will remain at £500 per application.

Question 5. Would it be possible for the Parish Council to approach local Councillors to request that they instigate the process for Sandra to be awarded Freedom of the Borough by Rotherham Council? Sandra's achievements have been recognised by the Crown and now by Pride Of Britain Awards it seems fair that the Village should find some way to show their appreciation.

Thank you for your suggestion. The Council plan to discuss this in the next Finance and General meeting. I have also made Borough Councillors aware of your questions to recognise Sandra Blockley with Freedom of the Borough.

9227 To receive an update from RMBC Borough Councillor - Zachary Collingham

Apologies were received from Cllr Zachary Collingham.

9228 To receive correspondence to the council from South Yorkshire Police Off Road Biking Team

The Clerk shared correspondence received from South Yorkshire Police Off Road Biking Team. The correspondence was read out as below.

"I wanted to update you all on the efforts of the ORBT over the last 10 months since my last correspondence. Apologies I have not made it to any council meetings in person, but if you could cascade this message to your communities I would appreciate it.

We are seeing a steady stream of reports coming in of bikes and quads causing problems throughout the county and anticipate the problem shifting from two wheels to four as the ground becomes water logged and lends itself to 4 wheel stability over two.

The ORBT have increased the teams Quad fleet to combat this seasonal trend.

We appreciate the urban areas will still see two wheeled activity. There has been an increase in the use of electric motorbikes, (as pictured) these are usually a model called Sur-ron. A licence is needed and helmets, insurance and MOT's if ridden on public place or a highway. Please do report if you



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witness these being used in public places or on the roads. They are not cheap, £4500 and if tinkered with can reach speeds over 50mph. note they do not have pedals.

We have had lot of people contact us expressing the difficulty in trying to report incidents.

101 reportedly taking to long and 999 not always being appropriate at the time.

I urge you to try and use the online reporting tool, specifically for the problem caused by bikes and quads.

Once registered a report can be put on within a few minutes. We will not respond immediately but at least we can show a true picture off what's happening, when, where and how frequently so we can allocate our time proactively patrolling those areas most affected.

Please share this link on the online reporting tool.

<https://smartcontact.southyorkshire.police.uk/report/nuisance-motorbikesvehicles/>

You may have noticed our very popular Off Road Bike Team Facebook page is currently down, (this is a force wide problem). In the meantime please use this email address to contact us. (In addition to the reporting method above.)

You can use the main South Yorkshire Police Facebook page, and the "message/chat" facility on there to report incidents should the online reporting tool not work for some reason.

So far this year the ORB team have taken 105 bikes and 15 quads off the fields/road...many of these were originally stolen.

Thank you for your help with this problem that affects so many of our communities."

9229 To receive an update from Cllr McCartan regarding football provision in Thurcroft from Rotherham United Community

The Council received an update from Councillor McCartan who presented information regarding Rotherham United and Community Connect. It is a great facility for the village which helps tackle antisocial behaviour and providing extra youth provisions in the parish.

The Council questioned why the Parish Council had not been made aware out of courtesy in the first instance and that this should be properly advertised to the community.

The Clerk will follow up with the organisers of the events.

9230 To receive the public feedback undertaken by Cllr Oxley with local community groups.



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The council noted the feedback from Councillor Oxley from the public consultation that was undertaken.

The feedback will be placed on the website for everyone to see the results. The feedback mainly focused on issues around the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall needing to have a revamp, better flowerbeds, more benches, and noticeboards.

9231 To discuss the initial baseline draft of next year's budget and receive all the proposed ideas from Councillors to discuss what should be put forth for next year pending further investigation.

The Council received the initial baseline draft of the costs to the parish and the money that is in the improvement pot. Councillors are also advised of the reserve amounts that are proposed to be allocated over the next five years to bring the reserves back in line with other parish councils. Councillors were given the opportunity to discuss the projects that had been received to put forward for next year's budget, pending the costing approvals once we have received the base tax from Rotherham MBC.

Due to the cost centres of Thurcroft, Brampton en-le Morthen and Laughton Common being dissolved. The Council has taken a unified approach to allocating money per the headline cost centre as below.

- Events - £20,000 to support with Kings Coronation and additional events.
- Environment - £30,000 to support with Benches, hanging baskets and other increased costs.
- Recreation - 10,000 (plus Grant funding) for additional play equipment.
- Cemetery - £10,000 to support in creating a memorial wall in the cemetery.
- Newsletters - £4000 to increase communication with the parish.

These amounts are made up of surplus budget after baseline income and expenditure and an unallocated reserve amount.

The Council are also aware of future earmarked reserves for an extension to Thurcroft Cemetery, Renewal of Christmas lights, the revamp of Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall that are due to be spent in the next financial year.



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It was noted by the Council that there is a 10% increase across electric and gas for the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall, as well a substantial increase in the budget for staffing costs due to increased hours of the Clerk.

9232 For the Clerk to advise the council that the Co-option Policy has been instigated.

Councillors were advised that the co-option policy had been instigated. Official confirmation had been received from RMBC and an advert for a casual vacancy by co-option is open for applications until 29th November. Three emails of interest have been received to date.

9233 For councillors to discuss and resolve further reported issues from councillors namely the bunting flags in the memorial garden and to clear up the further confusion with Thurcroft Veterans on who is responsible for the flagpoles in the Memorial Garden.

Councillor Oxley addressed the council regarding the bunting flags within Thurcroft Memorial Garden. It was discussed about the amount of flag poles required in the garden and decided to keep the three flags but may look to reviewing the flags after the Falkland's flags are removed.

The bunting will remain in place until they are removed with the Poppies at the end of December.

Resolved:- Any changes or items placed within the Thurcroft Memorial Garden should be put before the Council.

Resolved:- That the Parish Council have the responsibility to replace the flag poles within the parish – which relates to the three standing poles in the Memorial Garden and the one pole outside the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall.

9234 To approve accounts for payment and note contractual payments made under the clerk delegation.

Please see **Appendix 1**.

Resolved:- Council noted the contractual payments made and that the accounts due are agreed and can be paid.

9235 CLOSED SESSION – To receive a letter advising of the new pay scale from NALC for employees contracted to the NJC Pay scale

The Council received the updated NJC Payscale and understand the contractual right to pay this to employees including the back payment to the start of the financial year.



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9236 To notify the clerk of matters for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting

There were no items raised for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting.

9237 To set the date of the next ordinary Parish Council meeting.

The date of the next meeting was agreed as **Monday 19th December 2022** at 6.30 pm in the Gordon Bennett Memorial Hall.

The meeting closed at 20:28.