

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THURNHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Held on Monday 19th October 2009 at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors
Mrs Bloomfield
Mr Horne
Mr Jacques
Mr Morley
Mr Pilkington
Mr Skinner
Mr Smith
Mr Waite

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Morley.

Also in attendance: Mrs Sherrie Babington – Clerk, KCC Member Councillor Jenny Whittle, and members of the public.

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Councillor Sandford.

2. Declaration of Interests.

No interests were declared.

3. Minutes from last Parish Council Meeting.

The minutes were discussed and agreed (Waite/Jacques); these were then signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

5. Review of Parish Plan.

The Chairman spoke regarding the Parish Plan and the Village Design Statement for Thurnham.

He stated that the Parish Council needed to consider a way forward and how the action plan from the parish plan could be reviewed.

Councillor Jacques asked for member's approval to take agenda items 5, 6 and 7 together.

He spoke regarding the parish plan and the reasons for the review of the action plan.

The Chairman spoke regarding the unusual layout of Thurnham.

Councillor Bloomfield stated that she still had reservations as to how the VDS would be welcomed by Maidstone Borough Council.

She suggested that the Parish Plan should be focused on and looked at as a workable and usable document and used as a planning document by the parish council.

She suggested that the Parish Council should look at the Parish Plan Actions rather than weaken the mix by including the VDS.

Councillor Horne spoke in support of the VDS and stated that he did take on board the comments of Councillor Bloomfield; however he still felt that the VDS could strengthen the Parish Councils views with future MBC plans and the LDF.

Councillor Smith spoke in support of the comments from Councillor Bloomfield and the focus of the PC being placed on the Parish Plan. He stated that the PC should engage with MBC to progress the status of the plan and use this to manipulate the Borough Council on their views for the future of the parish.

Councillor Horne suggested that the valid questions raised by councillors should be put to Richard Eastham.

Richard Jacques spoke regarding the Parish Plan Action Points and he stated that the PC had let this slip.

A discussion took place as to how the review of the plan should be conducted. Councillor Smith suggested that the PC should review these on a three monthly basis.

Councillor Waite referred to the VDS and asked members whether they felt that this needed to be undertaken as a village based document or an area based document.

Councillor Bloomfield spoke in support of holding an informal meeting with the consultant Richard Eastham, this was agreed by all present and the Clerk was asked to progress a date for this.

Action: Clerk to progress.

The Chairman invited members of the public to speak regarding the Parish Plan.

Roger Vidler addressed members; he spoke regarding the parish plan and supported the comments made by Councillor Jacques.

He stated that the VDS was currently a distraction to the Parish Plan, and that this would only be of value to the Parish Council if it was adopted by the Borough Council and taken into consideration by them on planning issues. He spoke regarding its links with neighbouring parishes.

He stated that the recommendations from the Parish Plan could be looked at on their own merit and pursued by the PC; he stated that he would like to see the parish council work its way through the recommendations in the Parish Plan.

Members discussed the plan recommendations and the reasoned way in which the parish council could review the recommendations in the plan.

Councillor Jacques stated that the PC needed to make the effort to progress the plans recommendations and to make a decision as to the validity of them.

Mary Richards spoke regarding the recommendations and she asked if councillors could work at these each month as there was a need for these to be progressed.

Deborah Jacques spoke regarding the plan and her work as part of the Parish Plan Group, She expressed her disappointment in the lack of action taken by the PC with regards to the plan, and stated that it was important that the work was not lost.

Roger Vidler accepted that some recommendations may no longer be valid, but he felt that the key issue was to see that some action had been taken.

Members discussed the parish plan further, it was agreed that the Clerk and Councillor Smith should work on a spreadsheet for the recommendations and the action taken and come back to the next meeting with a proposal as to how to progress this further.

Action: Clerk and Councillor Smith to progress.

6. Village Design Statement.

No further matters were raised as this was discussed with previous agenda item.

7. Public Comments and Observations.

A resident of Crismill Lane attended the meeting to raise concerns at a planning application that was due to be submitted to change the old Pound Stopper building into a church.

Councillor Bloomfield declared an interest in this matter.

The Chairman confirmed that a formal planning application had not yet been received by the Parish Council and until such a time the Parish Council could not make comments regarding this matter.

Roger Vidler spoke regarding this matter.

8. Kent International Gateway.

Councillor Jacques reported on the progress of the Kent International Gateway and the progress of the Public Inquiry.

9. Financial Matters:

a. Financial Statement.

The financial statement was agreed by members. (Smith/Horne).

10. Future Items.

It was agreed to keep the Parish Plan as an ongoing item on the agenda.

Members discussed the forthcoming Joint Transportation Board Meeting and the item regarding the safe crossing of Ware Street.

11. Date of next meeting.

Date of next meeting – 16th November 2009.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed to the press and public at 9:05pm

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____