

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THURNHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2009 at 7.00pm.**

Present: Councillors  
Mrs Bloomfield  
Mr Jacques  
Mr Morley  
Mr Pilkington  
Mr Sandford  
Mr Skinner  
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 Councillors Horne and Smith.

**2. Declaration of Interests.**

No interests were declared.

**3. Minutes from last Parish Council Meeting.**

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

**4. Matters Arising from Minutes.**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Police Matters.**

PC Ian Loader gave his apologies to the meeting.

**6. Village Design Statement.**

Councillor Waite spoke regarding this matter, he stated that he had discussed this with Jim Boot of MBC and his advice was that at present the Village Design Statement was not a priority. However he stated that this did contradict the advice from Councillor Horne who felt that such a document was essential in view of the Local Development Framework.

He stated that should the Parish Council undertake a VDS then public participation would be essential.

He spoke on his views of such a document and the problems with the structure of Thurnham.

Councillor Jacques spoke regarding the VDS, he stated that the Parish Council needed to look at the LDF and if it wanted to make any logical comments it did need a clear evidence base to refer to. He stated that the VDS would be a way of influencing the LDF.

Councillor Morley spoke regarding this matter and the need for time to consider the need for the document.

Councillor Jacques stated that he disagreed with this comment and he reiterated the need for the Parish Council to be pro-active. He suggested that the PC should talk to a consultant regarding this matter.

Councillor Sandford stated that the Parish Council had received a grant for this project and therefore he was in favour of meeting with the consultant to discuss this further.

Councillor Bloomfield stated that her concern would be how the Borough Council would use the VDS.

Members discussed the structure of the parish and the three distinct zones, Councillor Sandford suggested that these could be looked at separately in the VDS.

This was discussed further and it was agreed that the first step would be to set up an informal meeting with the consultant to discuss this further.

***Action: Clerk to action as agreed.***

**7. Public Comments and Observations.**

Roger Vidler spoke regarding the VDS and the remote chance of it being adopted by the Borough Council.

He spoke of the work involved in compiling such a document and referred to the work undertaken on the parish plan and the recommendations from this.

**8. Kent International Gateway.**

Councillor Jacques reported on the progress of the Kent International Gateway and the work of the Joint Parish Group.

He informed members that the Public Inquiry was due to commence on 13<sup>th</sup> October and would last approximately 8 weeks.

He stated that the proof of evidence had been exchanged and the JPG had submitted 12 separate pieces of evidence and an opening and closing statement to present.

He spoke regarding the anticipated programme and the role of the Rule 6 Parties. He stated that the public should be encouraged to attend the Inquiry.

Councillor Bloomfield thanked Richard Jacques for his work on the JPG. She questioned the attendees at the Inquiry and the need for the opposition to visually show that they oppose the application. Richard Jacques stated that he would take this matter forward.

Councillor Sandford spoke regarding the Inquiry and thanked the members for their work, he echoed the need for public support at the Inquiry and he wished the JPG every success.

Councillor Morley supported the JPG and spoke of the good job that they had done so far.

**9. Heritage Award.**

The Chairman reported that the presentation of the Heritage Award would now take place with the presentation of the award to the successful applicant.

**10. Chairman's Report.**

The Chairman gave his report to the meeting.

He reported on the recent meetings that he had attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

Members considered a letter from Kent Highways regarding the proposed location of the Ware Street Crossing. Members agreed with the proposed location and asked the Clerk to write to confirm this with Kent Highways.

**Action: Clerk to write to Kent Highways.**

**11. Clerks Report.**

The Clerks report was noted by all present.

**12. External Reports:**

a. Ward Councillor's Report.

Councillor Horne gave his apologies to the meeting.

b. KCC Councillor Report.

KCC Councillor Jenny Whittle gave her report to members. She spoke regarding the proposed location for the crossing at Ware Street and stated that she would liaise with Kent Highways to try to establish its position in the programme.

She spoke regarding the highway problems in Caring Lane and reported that the road was due to be closed for two days in October to enable the gullies to be clear, and the hedges to be cut. She asked members to let her know of any other problems as these could be acted upon at the same time.

Councillor Sandford thanked Jenny Whittle for progressing the working Caring Lane.

c. Liaison with outside parties.

Councillor Bloomfield reported on the recent meeting of King George V Memorial Hall.

Councillor Sandford spoke regarding the gypsy meeting that he had attended. He referred to the report produced by the Borough Council and the maps identifying the sites in the borough. This was discussed and members raised queries regarding some of the identified sites. Councillor Sandford suggested that a letter should be written to MBC to fetch these queries to their attention. This was agreed by all present.

**Action: Councillor Sandford and Clerk to write to MBC.**

**13. Financial Matters:**

a. Financial Statement.

The financial statement was agreed by members. (Skinner/Waite).

b. Request for financial assistance from St Mary's Church.

The Clerk informed members that requests for financial assistance had been received from St Mary's Church for the maintenance of the church yard and clock. It was proposed by Councillor Jacques to give a grant of £2000 to the church; this was seconded by Councillor Waite and agreed by all present.

**Action: Clerk to raise cheque as agreed.**

b. Request for financial assistance from Age Concern Maidstone.

The Chairman informed members that requests for financial assistance had been received from Age Concern Maidstone for the financing of their Christmas Party. It was agreed by all present that as this would not directly benefit the residents of Thurnham, the parish council would not give a grant.

**Action: Clerk to write to Age Concern.****14. Parish Matters.**

a. Play Area Improvements.  
No matters were raised.

b. Footpaths and Bridleways.

A discussion took place regarding Footpaths KM81 and KM82. It was reported that these had been ploughed and were currently not walkable. Members discussed the status of these footpaths and whether the recently received correspondence was to divert or extinguish these paths. These were discussed further and it was agreed that Councillor Waite would inspect the paths to establish the current situation.

It was reported that the Japanese Knotweed was in need of treating along Bridleway KH123.

**Action: Clerk to write to land owner.**

c. Website.

The Clerk informed members that the website was now up and running and was being updated on a regular basis.

A discussion took place regarding items for the website

**15. Committee Reports.**

a. Planning.

MA/09/1020 Black horse, Pilgrims Way, Thurnham.  
Change of use of adjacent garden land for the creation of an overflow car park and the erection of a single storey side extension to existing kitchen.

MA/09/1021 Black Horse, Pilgrims Way, Thurnham.  
Listed Building consent for the erection of a single storey side extension to existing kitchen.

MA/09/1405 9 Port Close, Thurnham.  
Erection of first floor side extension.

The Chairman reported on the Appeal that was to be heard for land at Honey Hills Wood along Thurnham Lane. He informed members of the time scales for representations. The Parish Council discussed the activities currently being undertaken at this site and expressed their concerns. It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council should write to object to the activities at the site.

**Action: Clerk to make representations regarding this appeal.**

Councillor Sandford spoke regarding the presentation by G Forces and the pending planning application from them. He stated that as a number of councillors on the Planning Committee lived in Caring Lane there would be a need for substitute Councillors to be in place to deal with the planning application when it was submitted.

This was discussed and it was agreed that Councillors Pilkington, Skinner and Morey would deal with the application when it was submitted.

b. Highways.

Councillor Pilkington reported on the condition of the hedges along Pilgrims Way.

**16. Future Items.**

A newspaper article was circulated regarding a Bearsted and Thurnham Youth Forum which was being set up. The Clerk was asked to make contact with the group to establish further details.

***Action: Clerk to progress.***

**17. Date of next meeting.**

Date of next meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

***There being no further business, the meeting was closed to the press and public at 10:15pm***

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairman**

**Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_