Grindon and Thorpe Thewles Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Gwynn Dunn, 60 West Street, Stillington, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 1JY

Phone: 01740 631204 Email: thorpe.grindon@outlook.com

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9th June 2020. Due to the measures in place to restrict the spread of Covid 19 the meeting was conducted remotely using 'Zoom'.

Present:
Cllr. Michelle Davies (Chair), Cllr. Paul John, Cllr. Lynne Williams and Cllr. Gareth Rees

Gwynn Dunn – Parish Clerk (Temp)
Maureen Milburn – New Parish Clerk

1. Apologies for Absence
Apologies were received from Cllr. Richard Mudd and Cllr. Michael Lowson

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda
Cllr. Michelle Davies declared a personal interest in item 9 – planning application reference 20/0899/PABRE as she lives in a neighbouring property.

3. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th May 2020
The minutes were approved by all Councillors. They will be signed at the next full Parish Council meeting.

4. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting – brief updates about any items that do not appear on the agenda
No feedback had been received from SBC Planning Dept yet about the work taking place at the Vane Arms.

5. Public Discussion
The meeting had been publicised in the usual manner and residents had been invited to attend if they wanted too. The Clerk had not been contacted by any residents about any new issues. A Councillor had been asked by a resident if the Parish Council is informed about retrospective planning applications. The Clerk confirmed that retrospective planning applications are publicised in the same way as other planning applications. The Clerk also confirmed, in response to a query raised on behalf of a resident, that planning notices had been posted close to the site of the recent application on Durham Road. The deadline for comments about the application has been extended to accommodate any comments submitted about the plans in response to the notices.

6. To agree the process for granting Councillor dispensations and update the Standing Orders for the Parish Council accordingly
The Clerk had noticed that the Standing Orders did not clarify whether the Parish Clerk or the Councillors should determine if a dispensation request should be granted. It was discussed and proposed by Cllr. Davies, seconded by Cllr. Williams and agreed by all present that the Parish Clerk, as the proper officer of the Council, should make this decision. The Clerk will update the Standing Orders to reflect this. **GD**

7. To consider Councillor dispensation requests regarding Grindon Parish Hall
Prior to the meeting the Clerk had received three dispensation requests. These had been made by Cllrs. Williams, Rees and John. They were all seeking dispensation to be involved with discussions

and to be able to vote on any matters relating to Grindon Parish Hall. All three Councillors are either a Parish Hall Trustee or members of the Parish Hall committee/fundraising sub-committee. The dispensations were sought for up to four years (until the next Parish Council election) and the reasons given for the dispensations by all Councillors were:

- without the dispensation the number of persons unable to participate in the transaction of business would be so great as to impede the transaction of the business
- the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area **GD**

The Clerk agreed with the reasons provided and approved all three dispensation requests.

8. Finance

a. Accounts update

The monthly accounts update had been circulated to all Members.

b. To consider the payment of accounts to be presented to the meeting.

000031 - £306.08 - G Dunn – salary and expenses May-June 2020. Salary (£211.40), general overhead expenses (£10.00), reimbursement for Norton Antivirus package (£24.99), reimbursement for Microsoft Office 365 Package (59.99).

Details of this payment had been circulated to all members. It was proposed by Cllr. Rees and seconded by Cllr. John and approved by all members present.

c. Annual Audit (Subject to receipt of Internal audit report - to be carried over to the July meeting if the report has not been received.) To receive the Internal Auditors Report, approve the annual governance statement, approve the accounting statement and documents to be submitted for a limited assurance review by Mazars.

The Internal Auditors Report had not been received yet so this item will carry over to the next meeting.

9. Planning – to discuss any new and on-going planning applications

As requested at the last meeting the Clerk had contacted SBC and asked that decisions about planning applications are deferred while the measures to combat Covid 19 are in place – or if this isn't possible the consultation period is extended to enable more residents to find out about applications and respond. The response had been that SBC are unable to defer applications but additional time for comments will be permitted if, for example, it takes more time than usual to display a public notice. Any resident who is unable to access plans online can request a paper copy from SBC.

20/0862/FUL Woodside Farm, Wynyard Road, Thorpe Thewles, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 3JF
Erection of general purpose agricultural shed

There were no comments on this application.

20/0913/FUL Coppice Farm, Blakeston Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 3LE
Application for widening of site entrance
20/1055/HRN Coppice Farm, Blakeston Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 3LE
Hedgerow removal notice for approximately 83 metres of hedgerow

These applications were discussed together as they apply to the same property. The Clerk was asked to object to the removal of the hedgerow as hedgerows are significant wildlife habitats and it is a lengthy process to try and replace the habitat by re-planting as proposed. The Clerk was also asked to state that the road outside this property is very narrow with soft verges and Councillors feel that any development that results in additional traffic going in and out of the property is inadvisable due to the increased risk of road accidents. **GD**

20/0272/NMA Ballybrack, Blakeston Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 3LE
Non material amendment to planning approval 20/0272/FUL - Erection of side extension with room above to include two dormer windows, insertion of 4 dormer windows to front, 2 dormer windows to rear and erection of single storey extension to the rear (demolition of existing garage)
There were no comments on this application

Cllr. Davies left the meeting

20/0899/PABRE Barn North of Unit 2H3, High Middlefield Farm, Durham Road
Notification for Prior Approval for a proposed change of use from agricultural building to 2 no. dwelling houses and associated building operations.

GD

The Clerk was asked to object to this application as there is concern over the limited amount of parking available around this property.

Cllr. Davies returned to the meeting.

20/0722/VARY Land North Of Thorpe Thewles, Durham Road, Thorpe Thewles TS21 3JN
Section 73 Application to vary condition 2 (approved plans) of planning approval 18/0644/REM to allow for the extension to the rear/side gardens of Plots 34-40 (retrospective)
A decision had not been made about this application.

20/0629/VARY Land North Of Thorpe Thewles Durham Road Thorpe Thewles TS21 3JN
Section 73 application to vary conditions no.2 (approved plans) of planning approval 18/0644/REM - Reserved matters application for 40 dwellings including details of appearance, scale, layout, landscaping and erection of pumping station.
This application had been approved with conditions.

10. Progress Reports

a. Appointment of new Parish Clerk – handover arrangements and contract review.
The temporary Clerk informed members that she and the new Clerk are due to meet later in the month to handover the Parish Council laptop and files and work in progress with a view to the handover being completed before the next meeting. The temporary Clerk said the next four weeks will be her notice period and she will put this in wiriting for the Councillors. Arrangements were made for the new Clerk to be given the Parish Council printer – currently in storage with Cllr. P John.

GD
MM

Regarding the Clerks contract the new Clerk has the Certificate in Local Council Administration qualification (CiLCA) and, in accordance with the contract for the Parish Clerk, is therefore entitiled to an additional point on the salary scale. All members agreed that the contact for the Clerk should reflect this and Mrs Milburn will join the Council on salary point 10.

b. Proposed improvements by SBC to Wynyard Woodland Park and National Cycle Network route 1 – to agree a response to the proposals.
The Clerk had obtained responses to the questions raised when these projects had been discussed at the last meeting. Regarding the new route for the cycle path, the SBC Officer invovled said it has been designed to keep cyclists away from the road as much as possible. The field-edge route that currently exists is on private land which is leased to Sustrans and SBC could not create the kind of all-weather path that is envisaged on that current alignment unless they purchased the land or secured it on a very long-term lease – which is unlikely to be possible. SBC engineers are working on

a scheme which minimises the gradient of the proposed route as much as possible and the result will satisfy the relevant standards required for cycle routes.

Regarding the query raised about section 106 money that is due to come to the Parish for public open space improvements, that Clerk had been informed that this money has not been allocated to any project as yet and the Parish Council would be consulted about how to allocate the funds in due course. The District Councillor is also consulted about these funds. The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting for representatives of the Council and the District Councillor so that potential projects can be considered.

Having clarified these matters that Councillors all agreed that they are happy to provide letters of support for SBC for their funding bids for the improvements to Wynyard Woodland Park and National Cycle Network route 1. The Clerk will draft letters and circulate them prior to submission. **GD**

11. To consider a request to support a funding application for the Grindon Parish Hall
Cllr. Rees had circulated some material in advance of the meeting about the refurbishment plans for Grindon Parish Hall. He outlined progress made to date to secure funding for the work. £150 000 has been secured and there is a shortfall of £27 000. Two funding applications are currently being considered by landfill tax organisations. If either of the applications is successful a 10% contribution to the funding will be required from a third party to secure the funding. It was discussed and proposed by Cllr. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Williams and agreed by all present that the Parish Council allocate £3000 to support the renovation work at the Parish Hall. This can be used as the 10% third party support required if the funding bids underway are successful – or if not it can simply contribute to the overall work at the hall – which is due to begin soon.

Cllr. John confirmed that he has contacted the building companies currently working in the area to see if they can provide any support for the project. Cllr. Rees has been referred to the organisation Catalyst as their staff can assist community groups to find sources of funding for projects.

12. To consider an invitation to nominate a trustee for the Parish Hall Committee
This invitation was discussed and it was agreed that Cllr. Williams, who is already a trustee for the Parish Hall, can represent the Parish Council on the Parish Hall Committee. The Clerk will reply to the Chair of the Trustees to inform him of this decision. **GD** **LW**

13. Traffic issues around Wynyard Woodland Park – reports of problems during the closure due to Covid 19
The Clerk informed members about a situation that had come up during the main Covid 19 lockdown period when the car park to Wynyard Woodland Park was closed. Cllr. Lowson had received complaints from landowners on Wynyard Road as they could not access land with their agricultural vehicles as cars were blocking the road. The cars belonged to people who were driving to WWP for exercise and dog walking etc. The Clerk had passed on the complaints to SBC and had been informed that they were aware of the situation and had put up additional signs to try and prevent problems. The Police and Enforcement Teams had also been involved – but were limited in the action they could take. Since then the car parks have opened again which has alleviated the problem.

14. Correspondence – to review the list of incoming correspondence

11/05/2020	CLCA	Coronavirus – Information for Parish Councils (NALC)
12/05/2020	CLCA	Coronavirus – Information for Parish Councils (NALC)
13/05/2020	Cllr. GR	Details about proposals for refurbishment of Grindon Parish Hall
14/05/2020	CLCA	Coronavirus – Information for Parish Councils (NALC)
14/05/2020	Mazars	Limited Assurance Update
15/05/2020	TVRA	Newsletter
15/05/2020	SBC	Response to concern about parking outside Wynyard Woodland Park
15/05/2020	HMRC	Confirmation of PAYE submission
18/05/2020	Norton	Confirmation of Order – Antivirus package for laptop
18/05/2020	SBC	Planning consultation – Woodside Farm
19/05/2020	SBC	Planning Lists
19/05/2020	SBC	Response re query re response timescales for planning applications during covid 19 measures.
19/05/2020	Microsoft	Confirmation of subscription – Microsoft 365
20/05/2020	CLCA	Parish Online – Newsletter
20/05/2020	SBC	Confirmation of receipt of comments about planning application – 2 Durham Road, Thorpe Thewles
21/05/2020	SBC	Planning consultation – High Middlefield Farm
21/05/2020	CLCA	Advice re councillor dispensations
22/05/2020	SBC	Planning update – Astral Park application
22/05/2020	SBC	Response to queries re section 106 information and cycleway development proposals.
26/05/2020	CLCA	Coronavirus – Information for Parish Councils (NALC)
27/05/2020	CLCA	Post Lockdown advice for Parish Councillors
27/05/2020	TVRA	Newsletter
29/05/2020	SBC	Planning Lists
01/06/2020	NALC	Open letter to all Councillors
01/06/2020	CLCA	Bulletin – NALC
01/06/2020	Zurich	Confirmation of receipt of insurance premium payment
01/06/2020	SBC	Response re query – Thorpe Beck Farm development
02/06/2020	Co. Training Partnership	Online Training Courses
03/06/2020	BHIB Insurance	Free Guide for Local Councils – Managing Volunteers

15. Councillors Reports and items for future agendas.

Litter, including possible litter from drug use, was reported on a public right of way near Thorpe Thewles. In this instance someone has cleared the litter away. The Clerk said she would find out if SBC has a responsibility to collect litter of this nature from public rights of way. **GD**

The Clerk was asked to contact SBC to see if she can find out when general work programme will begin again and work to install the new bench and posts on the Village Green can be scheduled. **GD**

A number of stiles on the three villages loop walk between Thorpe Thewles and Whitton need remedial attention – the Clerk will raise this with the SBC Rights of Way Officer. **GD**

It was requested that re-painting the goal posts and gate for the play area is added to the next agenda.

16. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on 14th July. The location or format of the meeting will be agreed nearer the time as it will depend on the Covid 19 measures in place.

Signed Dated

Proposed

Seconded