Grindon and Thorpe Thewles Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2022 at 6.45pm in Grindon Parish Hall, Thorpe Thewles.

Present: Cllrs. Davies (Chair), Gillson, Moffat, Rees
In Attendance: M. Ireland, Clerk

1. **Public Forum**: No members of the public were present. The Chairman noted that Ben Icke, Vane Arms, was not available to attend this evening's meeting as he was out of the country. It was **agreed** he be invited to the October meeting. Councillors expressed concern that application had already been made to amend the license of the Vane Arms, which would, if accepted, extend the licensing hours, allow children in during all opening hours and considerably increase the size of the outside bar areas; much to the consternation of surrounding neighbours. **Action:** Clerk to extend invitation to Mr. Icke and to circulate copy of License Application to Councillors SSAP.

2. **Apologies:** None received.

3. **Declarations of Interest**: None declared.

4. **Co-option:** Candidates had been interviewed by Personnel Committee, (with the Chairman present ex-officio, and Clerk minuting), and made their recommendation based on the responses to the standard questions posed to each candidate. It was felt that both candidates had much to offer but recommended that candidate 1 be co-opted. This candidate had demonstrated both current and active involvement in village activities and some excellent ideas for how the Parish Council could develop in the future. The other candidate, though highly experienced, was not as good a fit with the current vision of the Parish Council. It was unanimously agreed to offer the vacancy to candidate 1. **Action:** Clerk to write to candidates accordingly and arrange formal Inductions for both the new co-option and Cllr Moffat. The Clerk tabled 3 copies of The Good Councillor Guide, and was requested to obtain 3 more, so that all Councillors had a copy.

5. **Minutes of 12h July 2022**: Cllr Davies proposed, with Cllr Gillson seconding, the approval of the minutes of 12th July. All concurring, it was **resolved** to accept the minutes as a true record.

6. **Matters Arising**: (a) ***Dropped Kerbs*** **–** Cllr Rees reported that key points where dropped kerbs were required were on Durham Road, opposite the terraced houses, near St. James Close and Astral Park, and on Middlebank. It was agreed that 6 were urgently needed and the Clerk noted that there were sufficient funds to allow the Council to meet half the cost of the installation of these this financial year, if SBC would meet the other half; she noted she was still awaiting the map of the village offered by Simon Grundy in July, onto which the proposed sites were to be drawn, though a reminder had been sent.

   (b) ***Refurbishment of benches, damaged posts and notice boards*** – Cllr Gillson reported that the benches had now been done and the revised quote being acceptable, the builder had been instructed to undertake the repairs to the posts and refurbishment of notice boards as soon as possible.

7. **Civility and Respect Pledge:** The Clerk spoke to the paper from NALC/SLCC which requested Councils to sign up to the pledge, which need had arisen following several years of increasing bullying and harassment of Clerks and Members by some Councillors. It essentially required Councils to ensure they followed the Nolan Principles, by providing appropriate training for Clerks, Councillors and Chairpersons, following good employment practices, ensuring good governance, having a Dignity at Work Policy, seeking professional help at early stages of a problem, learning from best practice and calling out bullying and harassment when it happens. Councillors **voted unanimously to sign the pledge** immediately. **Action**: Clerk to sign the pledge on behalf of Grindon & Thorpe Thewles Parish Council.

8. **Maintenance Committee Report:** Cllr Gillson reported that all the planters had now been planted up for the winter by a resident volunteer. It was **agreed** to move the planter currently outside the Hamilton Arms to Durham Road, to make a matching pair at the entrance to Hamilton Court. The Chairman noted that the Planters in Fishburn had considerable visual impact and that these were kept watered by a contractor paid for by the Parish Council. It was **agreed** to seek detailed information about these, and the costs involved, from the Fishburn Clerk. Cllr Moffat noted that he and the volunteer resident would be dealing with weeds and grass edges in March. Cllr Rees raised concern that nothing had yet been done with regard to the wall outside Hamilton Court which was now a safety hazard as the capping was loose and children often walked on the wall; he further noted that the wall outside the Manor was similarly in need of attention. The Clerk informed that Care for your Area had been contacted in July about this issue and agreed to follow this up. Cllr Rees then raised concern that the guy ropes to telegraph posts in Thorpe Thewles lacked the tubing covers seen elsewhere, and requested the Clerk request BT to address the issue; also, he raised concern that several trees which were close to telephone wires, could bring these down should we suffer more severe storms, and this should also be brought to the attention of BT. Cllr Moffat noted that the trees on the village green needed crown lifting and their trunks clearing of overgrowth; he noted that Arboriculturists lived in the village, and it was **agreed** he should seek a quote from them for undertaking this work. **Actions**: Cllr Moffat to obtain quote for trees on village green; Clerk to contact Fishburn PC about planters and Care for your Area about the walls and BT about trees and guy ropes.

9. **Social Activities Committee report:** Cllr Gillson reported that the Picnic had been very successful; that a Murder Mystery Night was being organized for the end of October, he thought by the Parish Hall, but this was not yet clear. He further informed that the Choir had booked a night at the Parish Hall to put on a public Christmas concert, with mince pies and wine and asked whether the Parish Council could support this in some way. All being in agreement, it was **decided** to make a donation of £100 to the choir if they made a formal request for help.

10. **Financial Reports –** the Clerk presented the statement of Financial Transactions and the Actual against Budget Report, which were **approved**. The Clerk informed that HMRC had issued a fine for non-payment of PAYE in the last quarter, however, she had been able to prove this had in fact been paid, and had submitted the receipt from HMRC as evidence; she noted that at least two other parish councils had received similar fines, even though they could evidence payment.

11. **Ward Councillor's Report:** None received.

12. **Correspondence:** (a) Letter from two young residents requesting support for opening a village shop. Councillors commended their enthusiasm and entrepreneurship but agreed more information was needed as to the need for, position of and goods to be sold in such a shop. (b) Letter from two residents requesting a wildlife duckpond be created in the village. It was agreed to make this an agenda item at the next meeting. (c) Notice from SBC of changes to Polling stations – noted. (d) CDALC – information on upcoming training – noted. (e) Cleveland Connected – information on Neighbourhood Watch survey – noted. (f) SBC – Christmas Lights installation – agreed. **Actions:** Clerk to write to young residents offering support if needed and to other residents informing of issue being an agenda item in October, to SBC agreeing Christmas Lights.

13. **Planning:** No applications received. The Chairman raised the possibility of purchasing the land behind Astral Park, using the funds from the Solar Farm development; other Councillors were not happy with letting the developer, Mandale Homes, 'off the hook' and felt it was not yet time to consider taking on the land. Cllr Gilson noted that the Evening Gazette had run a high-profile report on another developer who had left a development incomplete and had been shamed by the publicity into returning to complete the development; he had since contacted the reporter and explained about Astral Park, and the reporter had expressed interest in following this up. It was agreed that residents of Astral Park be invited to join a negative publicity campaign to put pressure on both Mandale and the Borough Council to take action to resolve the outstanding issues, including the drain outside St. James Close which goes nowhere! **Action**: Clerk to talk to residents of Astral Park to invite their participation in a negative publicity campaign.

14. **Items of Concern to Councillors:**

Cllr Gillson raised concern, supported by Cllr Moffat, about a temporary power cable installed by Mandale Homes, that is nailed to the fence that runs from Astral Park, behind St. James Close to North Close; we need to have confirmation this is no longer live, as the cable has been left with bare wires and could be a major health & safety issue.

Cllr Rees requested the SBC Events Manager be invited to the October meeting.

Cllr Moffat requested that Rev. Clair be asked to sort out the trees in the churchyard that are growing across the public footpath a field to the rear of the church; he further noted that the church wall had been badly damaged by a vehicle and was concerned that, if hit again, could collapse.

Actions: Clerk to contact SBC Environment/H&S Department regarding the exposed cable, invite the SBC Events Manager to next meeting and make Rev. Claire aware of concerns about the churchyard trees and wall.

15. **Date of Next Meeting:** 6.30pm Tuesday 11th October 2022 at Grindon Parish Hall

Meeting closed at 8.37pm

Minutes Authorised By:

Minutes Seconded By:

Date: