

DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE THORNHAM MAGNA PARISH MEETING HELD ON 17th SEPTEMBER 2015 AT THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: 15 Members including Joan Maughan (Chair), Tina Schwarz (Clerk and RFO) and Julia Henniker (minutes)

Attending: Cllr Diana Kearsley (MSDC), Cllr Jessica Fleming (SCC), John Cousins (Thornham Estate), Nigel Brett (Health and Wellbeing Officer, MSDC)

1 Welcome and apologies for absence Apologies from Lorna Polke, Joe Vaudrey, Robin Gorham and Dave Cowdell. JM welcomed everyone, especially the visitors.

JM went on to say that sadly Dame Anne Warburton died in June. She had been a great supporter of village life after a very distinguished public career. Her final help to the village was the funding of the box for the new defibrillator. On a good note, Margaret Keeley had returned to Thornham and was welcomed back.

2 Minutes of the Meeting of 14th May 2015 An item in the minutes of 14th May 2015 is incorrect. Tom Lund-Lack, the tenant of the Cabins, had made it clear that ArtActiv was a business, not a charity, when he reported to the Meeting held on 12th May 2012. The minutes including the correction were approved unanimously by Members of the Meeting.

3 Matters arising The Meeting was still anxious about inappropriate lettings at the Cabins and promotion of party events on one of the websites. Tom Lund-Lack had agreed to restrict his activities to educational activities to meet the planning permission which MSDC would monitor. JM said she would follow this up with Tom Lund-Lack. JH explained that ArtActiv had a three year lease with her, with two years still to run.

Gislingham development: The application for 40 houses had been turned down by MSDC. There had been no provision for affordable housing or thought put into school places and other facilities. This led to a general discussion about coherent plans needed for all the villages with understanding of the stresses imposed by extra traffic.

Thorndon School: JH said that further communication had been made with the Head of the School, the Kerrison site has both buildings and land which may be of future use to the School whose current full roll involved using the Church as overflow accommodation. Hardly suitable in the winter months.

4 Financial report TS circulated the updated budget and summary receipt and payments to 31 August 2015, together with the risk assessment and the returned and passed Annual Return from the external auditors, BDO. The issues arising report from BDO was read out this is to ensure that our Minutes in future fully record our opinion of these financial documents. All these papers were approved and accepted unanimously by the Meeting. TS reported that the allowance for grass cutting should be adequate for the rest of the season.

The playground report has still not been received from MSDC which may involve expenditure on our playground. The budget for the telephone box renovation had gone over budget as we used the correct red enamel paint which is expensive but means that the village would not need to repaint for many years.

5 Nigel Brett of MSDC led on the points raised at the last meeting about speeding traffic, the possible further development in Gislingham and the effect on Thornham Magna. In discussion, it was said that the authorities had shown extreme reluctance, in spite of repeated requests over 30 years, to extend the speed limit on the Gislingham road past the Thornham Walks entrance.

It was agreed that 11,000 cars this year, implying 20,000 visitors, made Thornham a unique site. There was an accident waiting to happen if traffic was allowed to continue at a legal 60 mph. It was agreed to ask Josephine Henniker-Major if Thornham Walks would do a risk assessment, and that MSDC would support an application. Jessica Fleming will also talk to the new Highways officer.

6 Updates from organisations JC reported on the Walks this summer which were doing well, though the income from the car parking, the only income the Estate has for running the Walks, had dipped since the café closed in May. A new tenant had been found, renovation was progressing fast, and it would reopen on 3rd October. Access to Permissive Paths: some of these paths were included in the Estate's Higher Level Stewardship Scheme which had four more years to run and was administered by Natural England. These paths were supposed to be open 24 hrs a day. JC said this led to difficulties for the Estate which is responsible for H and S as well as running an agricultural, forestry and sporting business without resources to police the public access. JC would ask for deregulation of opening times but consider later opening in the summer.

Josephine Henniker Major is setting up a volunteer group based on the old Friends group. They will meet

every third Wednesday to work in the woods. The new Friends will be open to everyone and will be free. It is hoped that those who don't necessarily want to work will help by being eyes and ears, reporting potential problems.

James Fawcett reported on Music at Thornham which had run another successful weekend this summer as well as other concerts. There is now a loyal audience and an established high standard. JM reported that Music at Thornham would establish a constituted group in order to have better access to grant funding.

The Friends of St Mary Magdalene had organised a talk by Professor Anthony King on the government of Britain, and now had the funds to help the Church with rewiring and installing extra lighting. JM is to chair a small group to promote and coordinate such activities and to apply for funding and other ideas.

Jessica Fleming talked the Meeting through her report on a new Chair for Highways which may help our case for a speed limit, aid to Syrian Refugees and an Emergency Planning Meeting on 13th November.

8 Any other business Progress Power/Stag Power had succeeded in its application to build a sub-station at Yaxley and power station at Eye Airfield. They had at least been refused permission to build a ground gobbling air insulated sub-station.

Trees: JC said no ash dieback had been found on the estate but the oaks were beginning to show signs of sudden oak death.

DK has a £5,000 locality grant for small projects and asked for applications.

Beyond the Wall is looking for new trustees, anyone interested can contact JM.

7 Future events

30th September: Ambulance Service training for CPR and AED, 7pm at Village Hall, free

11th October: Apple Day at the Walled Garden, 10 to 4

18th October: Film, Far from the Madding Crowd

18th October: Harvest Songs of Praise, 10.45, contributions to food bank. Lunch at Village Hall cooked by students from Beyond the Wall

9 Date of next Meeting: 14th January 2016

The Meeting closed at 9.20pm