

## THORNHAUGH PARISH COUNCIL

### BUSINESS PROCEDURES

#### Business as Usual

1. For meetings to be quorate, at least three out of five elected Councillors must be present (either physically or via video or conference link).
2. If unable to attend a meeting, Councillors must give as much notice of absence as possible to the Clerk to the Parish Council. In the event that apologies from Councillors would mean a meeting is not quorate then the meeting will be postponed and rearranged as quickly as possible after the original meeting date.
3. Clerk to Parish Council will seek input on Agenda content at least two weeks prior to any meeting.
4. Agenda and previous minutes plus all supporting paperwork to be circulated to Councillors at least one week prior to each meeting.
5. Each meeting to be formally minuted by the Clerk to the Parish Council. Draft minutes to be prepared and circulated to Councillors for final approval prior to publication on the website and in Living Villages.
6. Agenda items will always include as standard items:
  - a. Conflicts of Interest
  - b. Public Participation
  - c. Formal approval of the previous minutes
  - d. Financial review
  - e. Matters Arising

All other agenda items requested by Councillors will be included. If there are too many for a scheduled meeting, these will be prioritised and some held over to future meetings.

7. Any decision on expenditure for whatever reason must be formally agreed prior to any expenditure, such expenditure to be fully recorded in the Minutes.
8. In the case of managing village events, a maximum budget can be agreed and any sub-committee can then commit expenditure within the agreed budget without further reference to the Parish Council. A formal record of expenditure would need to be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting following the event.
9. All decisions must be carried by majority and formally recorded. Agreement as to who will take action on any decisions will be made and recorded at each meeting.
10. If required, business can be carried out by sub-committees on behalf of the Parish Council, members of which may be volunteers. If a sub-committee is headed up by a volunteer, that person will be asked to attend meetings to report progress on behalf of the sub-committee for that agenda item only. (These could be for example; Footpath Committee, Christie Hall Representative, Events Management, etc.)

11. Compliance with regulatory requirements will be required by all Councillors. Each Councillor must be fully aware of their roles and requirements under law (eg. election, conflicts, GDPR, etc.) If in any doubt, any Councillor may ask the Clerk to the Parish Council to seek clarification to ensure continued compliance.
12. All records, paper or electronic, will be held securely by the Clerk to the Parish Council and submitted to the any appropriate central archive office as required by Peterborough City Council.
13. All Councillors must ensure that, if any papers or electronic data is retained on personal computers or in files in their homes, these must be securely stored. In the case of paper data these must be stored in a locked cabinet or office, and in the case of electronic matter must be password protected.
14. Councillors are elected to represent the Village residents and as such may be approached with issues, problems or suggestions and these should all be noted and brought to the attention of the Parish Council at the next appropriate meeting.
15. Formal Parish Council Business and decisions taken, unless already in the public domain, should not be discussed with the general public.

#### **Business Issues Arising Between Meetings**

1. Business may be conducted and concluded outside of regular meetings via e-mail. Any discussions and decisions made must be subsequently recorded at the next Parish Council meeting to ensure an appropriate audit trail.
2. In matters of business received in between meetings that require formal responses to a set deadline, where possible the Clerk to the Parish Council will seek an extension to the deadline to enable open discussion at the next meeting. Where this is not possible and where the matter is deemed critical, an extraordinary meeting may be called. In other circumstances an exchange of emails sufficient to enable a decision to be made can take place, with the Chairman of the Parish Council ensuring that a summary response is prepared and sent to the Clerk to the Parish Council for formal submission to the relevant authority.
3. All business conducted outside of meetings must be held confidentially between Parish Councillors until such time as the decision is formally recorded in the Minutes of a subsequent meeting.
4. Where consensus cannot be reached via email, then an extraordinary meeting shall be called if the matter is urgent or contentious.
5. All email exchanges and decisions should be copied to The Clerk to the Parish Council to ensure they are kept up to date with matters as they progress.