

THORNHAUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Thornhaugh Parish Council held on 15th July 2019 in St Andrew's Church, Thornhaugh

PRESENT

Chris Smith (Chairman)
Louise Molesworth (Vice Chairman)
Martin Lewis
Adrian Rodgers

IN ATTENDANCE

Lisa Chambers and Penny Lewin-Watts (Christie Hall)
Stuart Foreman, Alan Bolton Frost and Laurence Hall (Members of the Public)
Deirdre McCumiskey, Clerk to the Council

Lisa Chambers attended the meeting to give a talk on the background to the Christie Hall and Thornhaugh Parish Council's contractual arrangements with the British Legion. She agreed to provide a copy of the current Lease and confirmed that she will be in contact well before the Interim Rent Review that will take place in 2021. The Chairman thanked Lisa for her talk and stated that it had been very useful for the Parish Councillors to learn about the annual rent payment. The information Lisa provided is attached to these Minutes for reference.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Ashleigh Kewney.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC FORUM

A Member of the Public suggested that if Thornhaugh Hall is put up for sale perhaps the current owner could be approached to see if he would be willing to donate 2.5 – 5 acres of land near the Old Post Office on Russell Hill for use as a playing field/recreation area. It was agreed that this would have significant implications for the Parish Council and needs to be discussed further before any approach is made to the owner.

4. POLICE MATTERS

There were no police representatives present. Thanks were expressed to Martin Lewis for forwarding an e-mail regarding three burglaries in Wansford that he had received from Neighbourhood Alert. It is advisable for residents to be vigilant.

5. MINUTES of the AGM Meeting of Thornhaugh Parish Council held on 3rd June 2019 were reviewed, approved and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed by:- Louise Molesworth **Seconded by:-** Chris Smith

6. MATTERS ARISING

i) **Dog Fouling**

The Chairman had produced a Draft Flyer asking residents to collect and bin their dog foul and this will be distributed to all residents.

ii) **Speeding Through the Village**

The Chairman had produced a Draft Flyer asking residents to keep to the speed limit and this will be distributed to all residents.

iii) **Planning Application 19/00398 – Erection of dwelling with garage at 16 Meadow Lane, Thornhaugh**

The Revised Planning Application is the third planning application for this site. It was agreed that the Parish Councillors will make objections on virtually the same grounds as they have for the two previous planning applications but highlight their concerns that the plans for the parking spaces and vehicular access are unsatisfactory. Martin Lewis will draft a response based on discussion at the meeting and this will be put on the Peterborough City Council Website.

iv) **Pavements**

Peterborough City Council has agreed to inspect the pavements in due course.

v) **Footpaths**

It was noted that the overgrown footpaths and grass verges have now been mowed and strimmed.

vi) **List of Representatives to External Organisations**

It was agreed to delete Thornhaugh Environmental Association from the list as the Parish Council does not nominate TEA' representatives. Martin Witherington has confirmed that he is willing to remain as the representative and to inform the Parish Council on any issues raised by the Augean Community Liaison Committee.

vii) **A1 North Layby**

There has been no further response/update from the Highways Agency regarding the closure request. The Parish Council will keep pressing.

7. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Chairman has received an invitation to attend the RAF Wittering Formal Reception on 4th September 2019 that she hopes to attend.

8. **FINANCE**

- i) Statement and Bank Reconciliation at 30th June 2019 was reviewed and approved as presented
Proposed by:- Louise Molesworth **Seconded by:-** Chris Smith

PKF Littlejohn has confirmed that there will be no External Audit following receipt of the signed Annual Return. The Chairman expressed her view that it would be beneficial to appoint a Treasurer who could support the Clerk with monitoring the finances and producing financial budgets/forecasts. Adrian Rodgers kindly agreed to take on this unpaid role.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

i) **Village Social Event**

Alan and Joan Bolton Frost have kindly offered the use of their garden for a Village Social Event. It was agreed that this will take place at 2.00 pm on 28th September 2019. Louise Molesworth agreed to head-up a Social Committee, working with Alan and Joan to organise the event which will be publicised on a Flyer that will be distributed to all residents.

ii) **Planning Application 19/01010 CTR – Cherry Tree – crown reduction to 20ft in height at 4 Meadow Lane, Thornhaugh**

It was confirmed by the Tree Officer (Stephen Chesney-Beales) that he would be visiting the applicant to discuss the proposals. It was agreed that the Parish Council will, as in the past, accept his advice on the way forward. Comments will be put on the Peterborough City Council Website to this effect.

- iii) **Planning Application 19/00346 – Tree Work at 16 Russell Hill, Thornhaugh**
Parish Councillors discuss the lack of response by the Tree Officer, Peterborough Planning Department and Diane Lamb relating to the correspondence to the tree works on Russell Hill. There was disappointment and frustration expressed about the amount of time and effort take to make constructive comment, only for this to be totally ignored. Although this application is now closed, it was agreed that information would be sought from the new Tree Officer (Stephen Chesney-Beales) on what the actual process is when objections are received and how comments, for or against, are considered.
- iv) **Planning Application 19/00934 LBC - Window replacement at the West elevation of the property at 23 Russell Hill, Thornhaugh**
There were No Objections to this planning application. Comments will be put on the Peterborough City Council Website to this effect.
- v) **Defibrillator**
Louise Molesworth stated that she been approached by Alan and Joan Bolton Frost with a generous offer to purchase and install a Defibrillator for the village. In addition, she had been approached by Laurence Hall with a generous donation to support the purchase and its running costs. Louise agreed to obtain a fully itemised quotation for the purchase, installation and running costs of a Defibrillator. The Chairman will contact Rev Jane Tailby to ascertain whether permission could be given to site the Defibrillator in the porch of the St Andrew's Church. Thanks were given to Alan, Joan and Laurence for their very generous support.
- vi) **Hanging Baskets**
Martin Lewis agreed to order and collect 10 Autumn/Winter Hanging Baskets later on in the year.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Next Meeting of Thornhaugh Parish Council will take place **at 7.00 pm on 16th September 2019 in St Andrew's Church**

11. CLOSURE

There being no further business to discuss, **the Chairman** closed the meeting at 8.45 pm

SIGNED

Chairman

DATE

16/09/19

Christie Hall

History:

The land was given by a local farmer to the British Legion in 1951. Any building that is erected on a parcel of land automatically becomes the legal property of the owner of the land, hence the hall is owned by the BL.

Mrs Christie, widow of Major Christie (RAMC) who died in 1948, arranged the purchase of the Hall as a donation to the Legion. She provided further funds from the Christie Will Trust to pay for the materials required for the Hall. The building work was carried out mainly by Legion members on a voluntary basis a few years after the war as the Legion was then the leading society in the community.

Over the next 24 years the Legion Branch Committee managed the Hall and arranged activities including the Annual Flower Show to benefit the whole local community. During this period the CWTrust donated further funds but by 1976 these were running out. Mrs Christie passed away in 1962.

The hall needed extensive modernisation and the Legion was not in a position to provide such financial support. That was when a public enquiry was held by the local residents who confirmed their wish for the hall to continue. It was the sense of shared community that promoted this decision.

The result was the CHMC who took over the financial responsibility for the hall. Consistent with this the 3 parish councils entered into the first lease with the Legion with the annual rent agreed to be £700 a year, the PC apportioned this between them on the basis of their electoral role voting populations. In 1993 with the annual rent at £1600 the shares were Stibbington 43.75%, Wansford 39.25% and Thornhaugh 17.00%. Later with the growth of Wansford, the apportionment was changed to what it is today - Stibbington 39.3%, Wansford 43.6% and Thornhaugh 17.1%.

From time to time the Trustees of the CWTrust have made further donations including 14000 towards the cost of toilets and ramp and the most recent and last year of £1000 towards painting the outside of the building, this being the last payment before the Trust ended.

Current rents

The rent review takes place every 10 years the last being in 2016. Therefore the increases look substantial as there is only one interim review at 5 years.

In 2016 the increase as a whole went from 2315 to 5000 per annum after months of negotiation with the Legion. Up until that time the increases had been modest.

The CHMC decided that to make the increase more acceptable to the Parish Councils, the Hall could afford to subsidise the amount and limited it to a £1000 increase overall for the 3 PC's, with the breakdowns as per the

percentages above, Thornhaugh's share being 17.1%. The Christie Hall would pay £1685 for the current 10 year lease, which will end in 2026.

Please bear in mind that the councils have not put a penny into the hall for its upkeep. The committee have arranged funding for new toilets, painting inside and out, new roof, new heating and new ceiling to name but a few.

Our income and expenses are nearly equal - in 2018 the difference between income and expenditure were £1293. Our only means of income is through hiring the hall and textile bank. Unfortunately our lottery no longer exists as it was getting increasingly difficult logistically to do so. Bearing in mind that we are paying £1685 towards the rent out of our funds and we need funds to keep the hall fit for purpose, we are not able to self fund.

The committee like yourselves are entirely voluntary.

Why fund the hall ?

The hall is there as a local facility to all three villages.

There are many regular classes that are run there;
2 dance groups, keep fit, pilates, yoga, dog training
We are pleased that the hall is being used frequently.

Society talks

Horticultural society, beekeepers, Burghley Fine Arts, painting class

Practice site for guitar, local parties, funeral wakes.

The majority of regular classes are attended by very local people.

So what does Thornhaugh get out of the Christie Hall?

Answer: as much as it puts in! The facility is there to use for gatherings, the regular classes are there to join. The people that pay the rent are getting a well run, modern hall available for ALL residents of the villages. We offer a discounted rate for users of the hall are local.

Conclusion:

Many of you may not know the history of the hall so I hope this has given you some background information.

The hall may not look that glamorous from the outside but it is an affordable pleasant space inside for groups and families alike that is on the doorstep.

Your parish council has agreed to a contribution of the rent until 2026. It will then be up for review again at that stage and will no doubt promote further discussion.

Village life has to be maintained and this is getting increasingly difficult with more people being more transient, more people out at work, less people unable to support community life, so anything that we can do to promote this ethos is to be applauded and supported in my view.

Thank you for listening.