

THORNBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Annual Town Meeting held on
Tuesday 26th April 2016 at the Town Hall

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Benj Emmerson and Gail Whitehead.

**OPENING
REMARKS:** The Chairman, Cllr. Guy Rawlinson welcomed all present.

MINUTES: The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 28th May 2015 were read by the Deputy Town Clerk, approved by the meeting and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

**MATTERS
ARISING:** There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

**COMMITTEE
REPORTS:** The Chairman called in turn on Committee Chairmen to present their reports:

**TOWN
DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE** The Report of the Town Development Committee was presented by its Chairman, Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell. She concluded her report by stating that it has been a particularly busy year for the committee and she would like to thank the staff, particularly Judith Payne who has been our Clerk, Sandra Richardson and Mary Sealey who have ensured that members have all the information and technology needed. Thanks were also expressed to Adrian Savery who has represented the Chamber of Commerce at meetings and fellow members of the committee for attending not only meetings but planning hearings and consultations.

The report is appended hereto (Appendix A)

**ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE:** The Report of the Environment Committee was presented by its Chairman, Cllr. Matthew Stringer. He concluded his report by thanking committee members, particularly his Vice Chairman, Cllr. Clare Fardell who has deputised for him when necessary.

The report is appended hereto (Appendix B).

**PLAYING FIELDS
AND CEMETERY
COMMITTEE:** The Report of the Playing Fields and Cemetery Committee was presented by its Chairman, Cllr Clive Parkinson. Before reading out his report; Cllr. Clive Parkinson thanked his Vice Chairman, Cllr. Bob Griffin, committee members and Jack Hainsworth who has represented

St. Mary's Church and given a report at every committee meeting. He also paid tribute to Council's outside staff for keeping the grounds to a high standard.

In conclusion, Cllr. Clive Parkinson thanked Judith Payne, Sandra Richardson and all the office staff for their support in a year that has seen quite a lot of changes in the Playing Fields.

The report is appended hereto (Appendix C).

**FINANCE AND
POLICY
COMMITTEE:**

The Report of the Finance and Policy Committee was presented by the Chairman, Cllr. Helen Harrison. She concluded her report by thanking Judith Payne, Sandra Richardson and Mary Sealey for all their support at meetings and behind the scenes.

The report is appended hereto (Appendix D).

**ANY MATTERS
RAISED BY
ELECTORS**

None.

CLOSURE:

The Chairman echoed the comments made by the committee chairs and with reference to the recent retirement of Judith Payne, he welcomed the newly appointed Town Clerk, Clare Nelmes who was in attendance. He thanked Sandra Richardson for standing in for the Town Clerk from 1st April 2016 until Clare Nelmes can commence her employment on 20th June 2016. There being no other business the Chairman formally closed the meeting.

A member of the public gave a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Guy Rawlinson for his work over the last year.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 2015-16

1. A total of 160 planning applications were considered during the year, just 2 less than the previous year. Detailed comments were made to the planning authority in each case. 86.8% of applications determined were in line with this Council's comments. This is approximately 2.8% less than last year's rate of 88%. 14 of the applications were either withdrawn or from an adjoining parish, therefore, no comments were submitted.
2. During the last year there have been two presentations from two separate developers for proposed developments within the town. One at Cleve Park off Morton Way for up to 350 homes and the other at Post Farm off Butt Lane for 125 houses Members had expressed their opposition to the two developments.
3. There has been continued active involvement in the Thornbury Town Centre Partnership. The Chamber of Commerce have been very active in promoting the town and continue to run the highly successful Food Fairs. The St Mary Centre regularly report on interest in the empty shops from retailers and have worked hard to fill the spaces, although with limited success so far. New pedestrian direction signs are due to be installed in the town shortly thanks to joint funding from the Partnership
4. Council submitted a detailed response to South Gloucestershire Council's Policies, Sites and Places Development Plan and South Gloucestershire Council's Joint Spatial Plan. That plan is due to be considered by South Gloucestershire in June.
5. The proposal to build a new power station at Oldbury continues to be closely monitored with regular newsletters received from Horizon Nuclear Power. Council has representation on the Site Stakeholder Group.
6. The twice monthly Farmers' Market is still proving extremely popular and both events have been instrumental in raising the profile of the town.

7. Members are still negotiating with South Gloucestershire Council for the reconfiguration of the Rock Street Car Park and are now awaiting new plans.

8. Committee has also considered the following issues:-

- Speeding cars approaching the mini roundabout at Quaker Lane and members were requesting SLOW to be painted on the road at the exit and entrance to Gloucester Road
- Deterioration of Listed Buildings in the High Street and The Plain and the monitoring of the state of the old Green and Burton building in Quaker Lane.
- Bus Services for Thornbury and travel to Southmead Hospital
- Support for traffic calming measures outside Grace Lodge
- Suggested road names for the Morton Way development.
- South Gloucestershire Council – Joint Spatial Plan and Transport Study.
- South Gloucestershire Council - Polices Sites and Places Plan – Designated Local green Space
- Designated coach parking within the town
- South Gloucestershire Council – Joint Strategic Planning Strategy
- ALCA – New Programme for Neighbourhood Planning Support 2015-18.

9. The Town Development Committee is a non-spending Committee so there are no financial matters to discuss.

10. This has been a very busy year with consultations on major developments taking a lot of Councillors time and energy. The Town Council's position remains to oppose further building outside the development boundary defined in the Core Strategy until such time as a new strategy can be developed to ensure the infrastructure to support new housing is in place. However the current Government planning guidance and the 5 year land supply makes this position virtually impossible to maintain and Councillors are forced to consider how best to make new developments work in the context of the town.

11. We know we are facing another similar year and have already had a presentation from Ainscough Strategic Land Ltd that falls just outside the timeframe for this report.

12. I'd like to thank the staff who as usual have provided excellent support, particularly Judith Payne, who until the last meeting was Committee Clerk at all meetings. Both Sandra Richardson, our Deputy Town Clerk and Mary Sealey have also been heavily involved in ensuring Councillors have all the documentation and information we need and this year have also introduced the new technology we have used at the last few meetings
13. Thank you also to all those Councillors and Adrian Savery, representing the Chamber of Commerce, who sat on the Committee this year for the time they have given, including that spent at consultation meetings and in discussion with the residents. It's been a very busy year and it appears that the next one will be as well.

APPENDIX B

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE 2015-2016

1. The Council continues to subsidise the Hanging Basket Scheme, supplying baskets to the town centre properties and once again providing a daily watering service. These gave a beautiful display in the town supporting the Thornbury in Bloom initiative and the town was once again awarded gold medal winner by Britain in Bloom in 2015.
2. The Committee is regularly represented at meetings of Sustainable Thornbury, South Gloucestershire Environmental Forum and Tree Strategy Group. The Chairman would like to recognise the value the Council places on all the volunteer groups that help the overall environment of the town.
3. The Tree Warden has continued to identify further areas in the town that would benefit from tree planting and has been working closely with South Gloucestershire Council to establish locations and agree a planting programme. It is hoped that in the forthcoming year the 100th tree will be planted. The Environment Committee have this year purchased further trees for the town.

4. Council's Tourist Information Centre has continued to operate efficiently with enquiries being dealt with by staff and our dedicated volunteer helpers. Committee has been working with the Town Centre Partnership to provide directional signs to various points of interest within the town and an order has now been placed for 6 posts and 21 directional signs for the posts.

5. We continue to maintain and supply litter bins, dog bins, bus shelters and seats throughout the town. Committee is investigating the provision of further seats within the town and are working with Thornbury Welsh Society to install a seat at the entrance to Tesco in memory of Derek Anthony, a former Councillor, Mayor and long standing member of the Welsh Society. A seat to replace one that was damaged in a road traffic accident on Gloucester Road had been purchased. This year's annual summer walkabout took place along Streamside Walk meeting at The Scout Hut on Park Road and finishing at St. David's Road.

We have also been involved in South Gloucestershire Council's Better Bus Area Improvements and welcome both the new shelter in Eastland Road and the proposed installation of RealTime information at the bus shelter in Rock Street.

6. During the past year, under the Localism Act, grass cutting, dog bin emptying and planting in the town had been carried out under contract by South Gloucestershire Council. This proved to be successful and it had been agreed to continue with another contract for the coming three years.

7. We inform South Gloucestershire Council of any faults that we, or the general public, have noticed in the footways and highways of the town.

8. Committee agreed to the usual opening of the Town Hall under the annual Heritage Open Doors Scheme and this proved very successful. Members also joined Litter Busters in the National Annual Spring Clean

9. Continuing support has been given to, Filnore Wood Allotments, the Medieval Fishponds and Composting Site. Committee are supporting the Composters who are fighting South Gloucestershire Council to retain a piece of land opposite their site that at present they use as a wood store but that the group would like to open as an environmental area.

10. Financial Estimates for the Committee for 2016-2017 show an increase in net expenditure of £3,065 over the previous year's original estimate. The figures include the continuing expenditure of £29,000 for the maintenance contract with South Gloucestershire Council for grass cutting, flower bed planting and dog bin emptying. With forward balances decreased by approximately £3,270 from the previous year, the precept requirement is increased by £6,335 to £58,631

APPENDIX C

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PLAYING FIELDS AND CEMETERY COMMITTEE 2015-16

1. Thornbury Town Football Club, both junior and senior teams, have made full use of the pitches and facilities at the Mundy Playing Fields this year, and although there were very mixed weather conditions throughout the winter, only a small percentage of football matches were postponed. Thornbury Town Football Club juniors and Thornbury Rugby Club have been playing regularly at the Chantry Field and a portaloo has continued to be provided during the rugby/football playing season for the use of players and spectators.
2. Committee has been pursuing with Thornbury Tennis Club the resurfacing and re-fencing of Council's Number 1 & 2 courts. The Club has prepared a three year rolling programme for the project and, I am pleased to report that the work has been completed and the Courts will be opened officially on the 7th May 2016. The opening coincides with the opening of the Tennis Club's newly refurbished Clubhouse.
3. The Round Table Firework Fiesta was held at the Mundy Playing Fields in November and, as always, was extremely well attended. The spectacular firework display was enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.
4. I am very pleased to report that the construction of the football pitches on Poulterbrook (land adjacent to the Mundy Playing Fields) has been completed and it is hoped that the pitches may be playable sometime during the next season weather permitting.

5. The play areas at Streamleaze Green, Osprey Park and Chantry Road continue to be very well used by local youngsters. The play area in Eastland Avenue, known as Eastland Tump and opened in March 2012, and has caused problems with anti-social behaviour. The derelict garages adjacent to the Tump that have been a congregating point for many youngsters have been demolished and it is hoped the anti-social behaviour problem will now improve.
6. All of Council's open spaces and the Kington Lane Cemetery have continued to be maintained to a very high standard. This year the Cemetery accommodated a total of 50 burials, interments of cremated remains and scattering of ashes, which was 13 less than in the previous year.
7. During the summer the Mundy Playing Fields were again immensely popular with both local residents and visitors alike. The new splash pad has had a few teething problems but has been popular with youngsters during the summer months.
8. Town Council has a statutory obligation to maintain the closed churchyard at St. Mary's Church and members are extremely grateful to all the church volunteers who cut the grass regularly and keep the churchyard in such good order. The repairs to the war memorial were completed in time for Remembrance Sunday.
9. The play tower at the Mundy Playing Fields that had been completely destroyed by an arson attack has been replaced by a large climbing frame and a combo unit consisting of swinging step suspended on wires.
10. Dog fouling in the Mundy Playing Fields has been a constant problem again throughout the year. It was agreed to try and resolve the problem of dog fouling by imposing a policy that all dogs should be kept on leads in the Mundy Playing Fields and would not be allowed within the play area or on the football pitches. 3 more dog bins and one rubbish bin have been ordered for installation in the area and 12 signs denoting the agreed policy will also be placed at strategic points around the field.
11. During the year, the Skatepark User Group run by Dan Potter had produced a plan of a proposed extension to the existing skatepark which also included a café unit. The extension

would include an extra three large structures. Members agreed to support the proposals in principle subject to the User Group obtaining the funding for the scheme.

12. In November Committee received a request from Thornbury Town Football Club to upgrade the football facilities at the Mundy Playing Fields. These improvements included the installation of floodlights, construction of a 100-seater covered stand, construction of 1 metre wide paths to the North and West of the pitch and the enclosure of the No 1 pitch with a 1.83m high fence with gates provided in the East and West fences. At the present time if Thornbury Town Football Club won the league it would be unable to progress to a higher league because the ground did not meet the required criteria. It was anticipated that the proposals would be funded by a grant from the Football Foundation. Members agreed to give positive support in principle to the proposals subject to a full public consultation being undertaken and all planning approvals obtained.
13. Year 10 Castle School pupils had requested that Council consider several proposals for works to Oakleaze Green. These included the construction of a path across the green, the provision of football posts and the installation of some toddler play equipment. Last year it had been agreed it would be necessary to undertake a public consultation with local residents and members have, this year, been working on the production of the document which had now been completed would be circulated in the near future.
14. It was agreed during the year that a Defibrillator, the same model as the one in St. Mary Centre would be installed on the wall of the pavilion at the Mundy Playing Fields, An order has been placed and the equipment should be installed in the near future.
15. Financial Estimates for the Committee for 2016-17 shows decrease in net expenditure of £4,800 over the previous year's original estimate. Allowance is made of £30,000 for new play equipment, £5,000 for skate park improvements and all services maintained at present levels. With forward balances increased by approximately £7,500 over the previous year this has resulted in a decrease of the precept requirement by approximately £12,000 to £124,599

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE 2015-16

1. The allocation of grant aid to local organisations has been approximately £8,000 this year and details of recipients are tabled at this meeting.
2. During the year consideration has been given to the following and detailed comments submitted as appropriate:-
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Taxi Licensing Pre-Consultation
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Special Expenses & LCTR Support Grant Consultation
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Draft Statement of Licensing Policy – Consultation
 - Children’s Community Health Services - Recommissioning
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Draft Street Trading Policy and Application Guidelines 2015-2018
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Review of Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Team
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Sexual Health Consultation
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Child Poverty Needs Assessment
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Summary Draft Cycling Strategy
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Post 16 Travel Assistance Consultation
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Extra care Housing Charging Policy Review Consultation
 - South Gloucestershire Council - Review of One Stop Shops and Customer Services Consultation
 - South Gloucestershire Council – Changes to Library Services Consultation
3. During the year the Committee has been represented at the following meetings
 - South Glos. CCG for Thornbury Hospital
 - Safer and Stronger Community Group
 - Parish Charter Working Group

- Thornbury Library Committee
 - Thornbury and District Heritage Trust Council
 - Four Towns and Vale Link Community Transport
 - Town's Trust
 - Thornbury and District Community Association
 - 'Krunch' Stakeholder Group
 - Oldbury Power Station Site Stakeholder Group
 - Thornbury in Bloom
 - William Stephen's Charity
 - Thornbury Lighting Services
 - South Gloucestershire Transport Forum
 - Town Centre Partnership
 - Dementia Friendly Community
4. The Committee continued to liaise with the Police and welcomed their regular attendance at meetings

 5. Since first considering the North Bristol NHS Review, Committee has been totally committed to ensuring the future of Thornbury Hospital. Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell has attended Steering Group Meetings regularly and continues to campaign vehemently on Council's behalf to ensure Hospital services are not only retained in Thornbury but greatly improved.

 6. The Safer and Stronger Community Group has continued to meet during the past year and Council's representatives have provided reports on the issues raised. Following financial cuts by South Gloucestershire Council the Thornbury and Alveston Group had now amalgamated with Severnside.

 7. Council has been working closely with the Police Force to provide office space for the Thornbury Beat Team at the rear of the Town Hall and it was hoped that they would be in situ in the near future.

8. The Youth Club run by Krunch continued to be a great success with a large number of youngsters. Krunch has been providing alternatives such as mentoring and personal development programmes and funding has been received to enable the running of a babysitting course for young people aged 14 and over. It was revealed that in the forthcoming year funding from South Gloucestershire Council for youth funding would be drastically cut and committee recommended this Council give further funding to enable this invaluable work to be carried out
9. Committee appointed three councillors as council's representatives to help with arrangements for the forthcoming Remembrance Day Parade and Service.
10. Council carried out a review of Town Councillors Allowances but unanimously agreed that Councillors remain volunteers and not receive payment.
11. In October of 2015 the Town Clerk had informed members that she would be retiring at the end of the financial year and Council had sought to find a replacement who it was hoped would be starting early in the next financial year.
12. Looking now at finance and the three budgets administered by the Committee:-

The Central Services budget for 2016-17 shows an increase in net expenditure over the previous year's original estimate of £7,130. With forward balances increased by approximately £3,400 from the previous year, the precept requirement has decreased by approximately £17,800 to £172,903.

The Land and Property budget for 2016-17 shows an increase in net expenditure over the previous year's original estimate of £3,625. With forward balances decreased by £5,180 from the previous year, the precept requirement has increased by approximately £8,800 to £17,235.

The Grants and Contingency budget shows an increase in net expenditure of £29,064 and a decrease of forward balances of approximately £18,000 from the previous year. The precept requirement has increased by approximately £47,250 to £115,591.

13. Taking the estimates as a whole compared with the 2015-16 original estimates, capital expenditure will decrease by £4,000 and loan repayments will decrease by £3,700. Wages and superannuation will increase by £15,610 and other costs increase by £28,945. Income, excluding the precept but including grants will decrease by £10,304.

14. At its January meeting Council set a precept of £488,959 an increase of £32,416 over the previous year. With the decision to increase the number of Band D houses in Thornbury by 211 this equates to Band D Council Tax of £109.73 an increase of £2.18.