

**THURSLEY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Annual Meeting**

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.00 pm**  
**Remote meeting via Zoom Video Conferencing**

**Attendees:** Cllr J. Mendelssohn (Chair)      Cllr H. Flavell      Cllr J. Luff  
Cllr J. Swift      Cllr M. De Vries  
Cllr D. Sellars (from 7.10 pm following his appointment)      Mrs E. Felton (Clerk)

**Also attending were:** Cllr D. Else (WBC – from 7.30 pm)      Cllr J. Else (WBC - from 7.50 pm)

**1.0 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Following a nomination process, it was declared that Cllr Mendelssohn be re-elected as Chairman.

**2.0 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Following a nomination process, it was declared that Cllr Swift be re-elected as Vice Chairman.

**3.0 DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Cllr Mendelssohn agreed to sign and send his completed Declaration of Acceptance of Office form to the Clerk to be countersigned.

**4.0 CO-OPTION PROCESS**

The Chair advised that there was one candidate for the vacancy which exists following the retirement of Mr Peter Hunter as a Parish Councillor.

Mr David Sellars introduced himself to Councillors and provided an overview of his experience and skills as per his statement which had been provided to Councillors in advance of the meeting.

Mr David Sellars was appointed as a Councillor. He signed the Acceptance of Office form which had been provided to him in advance of the meeting and joined the meeting in his new role as a Parish Councillor.

It was noted that Cllr Sellars would not be allocated a specific role or responsibility at this time but that he would be available to support Councillors and parishioners as required.

**5.0 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

It was noted that apologies had been received from Cllr Owen and Cllr David Harmer (SCC) as they were not able to attend due to work commitments. These apologies were accepted.

## **6.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No members disclosed any (a) Personal, (b) Prejudicial interests which they are required to disclose by section 94(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in accordance with The Parish Council (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007.

## **7.0 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

It was agreed that Cllr Owen, Cllr Swift, Cllr Luff and Cllr Mendelssohn would take on the responsibility for checking the expiry dates of the defibrillator pads in the unit located close to their home address and inform the Clerk when new pads are required.

**The Clerk was asked to include the full names of Councillors on the responsibilities and roles list.**

Following review of the 'Appointment of Member to Committees and Other Bodies' list for 2021-22, the list was agreed subject to the above changes.

## **8.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS**

Councillors reviewed and approved the Standing Orders. It was noted that there had not been any changes to the document since the previous review.

## **9.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Councillors reviewed the Financial Regulations. It was agreed that no changes were required at this time.

## **10.0 REVIEW OF POLICIES**

Councillors reviewed the Complaints Procedure, Data Protection Policy and Equal Opportunities in Employment policy. It was agreed that no changes were required at this time.

## **11.0 APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021 were approved by the Council to be signed by the Chairman.

## **12.0 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

(12.1) It was confirmed that Cllr Flavell and the Clerk had prepared and submitted comments to WBC regarding application reference WA/2021/0401 – Kestrel Wood Stables.

(12.2) It was noted that Cllr Owen had made local arrangements for a litter pick week commencing Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May and that there had been positive feedback received with good social media coverage.

**(12.3) Cllr Mendelssohn advised that he would check with Mr Peter Hunter about installation of the solar panels on the VAS unit.**

(12.4) Following agreement at the previous meeting about the areas of land to be left for rewilding, it was noted that comments had been received from two parishioners suggesting wildflower management may be needed and offering input into the proposal.

It was noted that Cllr de Vries had offered the services of her gardener to consider the best way forward.

**It was agreed that following discussion Cllr de Vries and Cllr Swift would liaise with Mr Richard Bates on the matter.**

It was noted that Cllr de Vries had prepared an article for inclusion in the June edition of the parish magazine.

### **13.0 PLANNING ISSUES AND COMMUNICATIONS**

(13.1) WA/2021/01062 – Prospect Cottage, The Street, GU8 6QE  
Listed building consent for the installation of 4 steel wire tie rods to support the roof/walls of the main room.

Following discussion and review of the documents, it was agreed that the Parish Council had no comment regarding the application.

(13.2) It was noted that a decision notice had not yet been received from the Planning Inspectorate following the recent appeal hearing.

(13.3) Cllr Mendelsohn advised that following receipt of complaints regarding traffic in the village associated with the filming taking place on Hankley common, he had chased WBC again to request an update on the licensing arrangements for filming that had been discussed with them previously.

It was noted that heavy goods vehicles and other traffic had been accessing the filming site through the village following signage from the A3 whereas previously it had been agreed that this would not happen.

**Cllr Mendelsohn reported that he had already written to Ms Beth Howland-Smith (WBC) to raise the matter but has not as yet had a response.**

(13.4) It was noted that a communication had been received from Mr Zac Ellwood (Head of Planning WBC) outlining the problems that are being experienced following implementation of a new computer planning system resulting in delays of several weeks for validation of new planning applications.

Cllr Mendelsohn advised that a new planning application for Tilhurst had been submitted to WBC but was likely to be delayed as a result of this. It was noted that work on the site had stopped awaiting the outcome of the application.

*Cllr David Else joined the meeting.*

Cllr David Else confirmed that validation of applications is currently taking 7-8 weeks as a result of the new planning system not working efficiently. He advised that permission notices are not being issued at this time.

(13.5) It was noted that there were also delays being experienced with the WBC enforcement team arranging time critical site visits to check for planning condition breaches with no response to such requests being acknowledged by them. It was suggested that the problems being experienced with the planning applications should not impact the work of the enforcement team.

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No members of the public were present and no communications had been received prior to the meeting so public question time was not necessary.

#### 14.0 FINANCE

(14.1) The following list of payments for May was presented and duly authorised and approved for payment:

##### May

Voucher Reference	Payee		Amount
008/21	1st Call Trees Limited	Tree works	£96.00
009/21	Westotec	Battery	£12.00
010/21	J. Swift	Expenses	£27.85
011/21	J. Mendelssohn	Expenses	£8.49
012/21	E. Felton	Salary & Expenses (incl. ICO)	£442.59
013/21	HMRC	May payment	£95.60
014/21	R. Bates	Charging of VAS batteries	£20.00
015/21	R. Knight	Tree survey	£25.00
016/21	Thursley History Society	Remembrance works/grant	£935.61
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£1,663.14</b>

(14.2) It was noted that there had been two additional payments prepared in April following the meeting as follows:

Voucher Reference	Payee		Amount
006/21	E. Felton	Battery for VAS	£73.79
007/21	Barnett Design	Thursley History Society Grant	£800.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£873.79</b>

(14.3) Cllr Swift provided information regarding the two payments made to Barnett Design for £800 and the Thursley History Society for £935.61. He explained that these payments were funded from the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) fund which the Parish Council held as a ring-fenced amount. It was noted that the AFC had given permission for the funding deadline to be extended and for the funds to be spent outside of the original funding categories.

Cllr Swift advised that the costs for the preparation and printing of the booklet had now been transferred and that only the costs for the display work and purchase of the bench from the fund were outstanding.

It was noted that the cost of the original bench selected had increased and that Cllr Swift would be looking to see if alternative options were available. **It was agreed that Cllr Swift would revert with a proposal for the bench purchase before the summer break so that it could be made available for installation by November.**

(14.4) Discussion took place regarding the insurance policy comparison document which had been available to Councillors in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the five-year agreement with Zurich expired in June this year. Cllr Mendelsohn explained that the Clerk had attempted to prepare a document to enable comparison to be made on a like for like basis. Discussion took place regarding the three companies who had prepared quotes.

Following discussion it was agreed that as long as it is confirmed that the increased legal cover of £200k is sufficient for Parish Council needs the insurance policy be renewed with Zurich on a five-year basis to benefit from the reduced costs. **The Clerk was asked to make the necessary arrangements for cover to continue from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.**

*Cllr Jenny Else joined the meeting. It was agreed that the Borough Councillors be invited to present their reports at this time.*

## **15.0 COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

(15.1) Cllr Mendelsohn explained that he had received a communication from Mr Arthur Lindley regarding the arrangements in place to collect his recycling by WBC which he had spoken to Cllr Jenny Else about.

Cllr Jenny Else advised that she had spoken to the relevant parties regarding the problem of the refuse vehicles not being able to collect recycling from Rock Cottage resulting in the homeowner having to use black plastic bags instead and that a solution to the matter will be communicated in due course.

(15.2) Cllr Jenny and David Else advised that they were available to help and support the Parish Council and parishioners. Cllr Jenny Else thanked the Parish Council for having the opportunity to work with them.

(15.3) It was noted that the Deputy Leader of WBC had been promoted to Leader of the Council with the out-going leader taking on the role of Deputy Mayor.

(15.4) It was noted that the County elections were taking place on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May.

## 16.0 HIGHWAYS

(16.1) Cllr Swift made reference to the communication received from Highways England earlier in the day regarding further planned closures of the Hindhead tunnel over the next two weekends.

He advised that he was in communication with Mr John Nicholson (Highways England) regarding the on-going signage problems in place during these closures. Discussion took place regarding the suggestion that French Lane be closed during closures to stop traffic from entering Bowlhead Green and resolve the problem of large vehicles becoming stuck. It was agreed that this proposal may be a good solution to the problem as long as parishioners are aware of the closure in advance although consideration may need to be given to where the vehicles may travel instead. **Cllr Swift agreed to raise these points with Mr Nicholson.**

(16.2) Cllr Mendelsohn advised that Cllr Owen had asked him to raise a concern with SCC about the edges of the patching work that had taken place on Thursley Road not being sealed adequately.

Cllr Mendelsohn advised that a concern had also been raised about the erosion of the grass triangle area at the end of Sailors Lane at the assembly meeting the previous week and there were on-going concerns regarding erosion of the Clump on Dye House Road.

**He advised that he had a meeting arranged with Mr Adrian Selby (SCC Highways) the following morning and he would raise all of these concerns with him at that time.**

## 17.0 VAS

Cllr Swift reported that the VAS unit had been monitoring traffic movements in both directions and had recorded approx. 10,000 speeding vehicles per week. He advised that unfortunately it had been necessary to cut off one of the combination locks on the unit following a fault. It was noted that the unit is currently not working but that it will be operational again shortly.

Cllr Swift advised that the volunteer group of six people are making progress with regards to training and change-over arrangements etc. It was noted that the solar panel adaptations would support this process.

## 18.0 EPIC CYCLING EVENTS

Cllr Mendelsohn provided an overview of the communications received regarding the Epic Cycling event which is planned to take place on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2021. He advised that the event appeared to have the support of local organisations but that other larger bodies appear to be unaware of the arrangements.

It was noted that the event included timed races along bridleways including Greensands Way. It was agreed that encouraging bike racing over bridleways in AONB and the lack of communication with those organisations looking after the bridleways were matters of concern.

Cllr de Vries suggested that although she supported sports events, she was concerned about racing on bridleways and possible interaction with horse riders using the same tracks as this could potentially be very dangerous.

Cllr Flavell advised that she had been in communication with relevant parties about the event. She advised that the route information was not yet available and that there was some debate about whether it was a cycling or racing event. She reported that whilst the communications indicated a timed event, the organisers advised that the times are not monitored and only used to ensure riders are spaced equally across the route.

Cllr Flavell advised that SCC were awaiting details and that the National Trust were very concerned and had taken legal advice. She suggested that the event organisers would need local authority permission. Following discussion it was agreed that it may be too early to notify the Police as insufficient information is currently available.

In response to a suggestion that the Parish Council write a formal letter of concern, Cllr Flavell suggested that the SCC Countryside team and AONB are also very concerned about the impact of such an event and so it may be better to wait until further information is available before agreeing a course of action. **Cllr Flavell agreed to report back to Councillors in due course.**

#### **19.0 HAMMER POND UPDATE**

It was noted that an update had been provided at the assembly meeting the previous week.

Cllr Mendelsohn confirmed that progress had been made with regards the purchase of land and submission of a new/revised planning application to WBC which had Environment Agency support. Discussion took place about possible delays with the application in light of the problems currently being experienced by the WBC planning team. It was suggested that unless the application is considered promptly, plans to start the work in September may be impacted.

**Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Mendelsohn would check with Mr Michael Woodhouse (Natural England) as to the status of the planning application and then he would write to Mr Zac Ellwood to highlight the required timescales. Cllr David Else asked to be copied into the correspondence.**

#### **20.0 PRESERVE OUR RESERVE UPDATE**

It was noted that an update had been provided at the assembly meeting the previous week.

Cllr Mendelsohn made reference to the CIL funding amount of £98k from WBC which should be confirmed shortly and the application Natural England had made for funding which should hopefully result in £100-150k being allocated to the project. He advised that with the fund-raising amount of £50k which was available, he was optimistic that the works would be able to commence in September with a funding amount in place for the future.

It was noted that Natural England had started the specification process and that hopefully the works would be completed by this time next year.

Cllr Mendelssohn reported that the wardening scheme on the nature reserve was now operational with uniformed volunteers on site to enhance the visitor experience, provide directions and remind them about the use of BBQ's etc.

## **21.0 THURSLEY CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE**

Cllr Swift provided details of the joint Parish meetings which he had attended with Cllr de Vries and representatives from Witley, Churt, Tilford and Wonersh Parish Councils on the subject of climate and sustainability. He made reference to the good progress that some Parish Councils had made. He advised that it had been a good forum in which to share experiences and information. It was noted that the group had been interested in the tetracycling arrangements which Mrs Nicki Bates had introduced in the village.

Cllr Swift reported that the group had invited Ms Delma Bryant (WBC) to attend the next meeting to discuss EV charging points. He advised that the group also intended to discuss wildflower/tree planting schemes.

It was noted that Cllr Swift was also in communication with Peper Harow Parish to provide them with guidance following them passing a motion on climate emergency.

Cllr Swift reported that the plan was still to undertake further tree planting in November but that as a result of feedback following planting of the hedging, there was a need to consider purchasing trees with an increased height. It was noted that this would mean an increased purchase cost which would result in less funds being available for future maintenance but that landowners were satisfied with this arrangement.

## **22.0 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY MEETING FEEDBACK**

Cllr Mendelssohn advised that there had been positive feedback received following the annual assembly meeting the previous week and that he had been encouraged by attendance of approx. forty people. Councillors agreed that they had also received positive feedback and that Cllr Mendelssohn had done a good job in chairing the meeting.

Cllr Mendelssohn advised that in advance of the meeting next year, consideration would need to be given to the format and content.

Cllr Mendelssohn and Cllr Swift advised that following the meeting, they had received telephone calls and emails to support the Parish Council's view that it was not appropriate for them to make charitable donations and that parishioners should be able to support their own charities. It was confirmed that the Clerk should continue to respond accordingly to such requests for funding to inform them of the Parish Council's view on this matter.

## **23.0 LITTER PICK ARRANGEMENTS**

See 12.3) above.

## **24.0 MEETING DATES 2021-22**

The meeting dates for 2021-22 had been available to Councillors in advance of the meeting. Cllr Mendelssohn explained the frequency and schedule to Cllr Sellars.



It was noted that face to face meetings would resume next month. Discussion took place regarding the need for members of the public to submit questions to the Clerk in advance of the June meeting and then for arrangements to return to normal from July.

## **25.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

It was noted that correspondence is usually shared with Councillors at the time of receipt. The following points were discussed:

- **Following receipt of a communication regarding rural speed limits in Surrey and discussion on the matter, Cllr Swift was asked to write to Mr Duncan Knox (SCC) to gain an understanding of plans to extend the initiative to the local area.**

## **26.0 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING**

- Items carried forward from above
- Internal audit

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

The date of the next meeting is **Tuesday 1st June 2021** at 7.00 pm.

Signed .....

**1<sup>st</sup> June 2021**