

# THEDDLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the monthly meeting held on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021, 7.30pm, Theddlethorpe Village Hall, Silver Street, Theddlethorpe All Saints.

**Chairman:** Cllr C Richardson, **Vice-Chairman:** Cllr B Lister (not present)

**Parish Councillors:** Cllr J Shepperd, Cllr D Sears, Cllr C Lister (left 9:25pm)

**Also, present:** **Parish Clerk:** None  
**County Councillor:** N Sears, D McNally  
**District Councillor:** S Harrison  
**Members of Public:** None

## **Item 09/21-01 Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the Village Hall & hoped to see many of the Parishioners attend future Parish Council Meetings.

## **Item 09/21-02 Public Forum**

There were 17 members of the public (MOP) present initially at the meeting & 3 further (MOP's) joined during the Public Forum.

The Chairman explained the rules of the meeting & the 15-minute time duration.

The information below has been raised and these are summary notes only due to the length & complexity of dialogue used.

Q1. What connection does the Parish Council (PC) have with St Helens Church & the recent requests for working parties etc.

A1. The Parish Council has no direct connection except geographical location. The responsibility for the facility is with the Church Diocese of Lincoln. It is the understanding of the PC that an assessment process is currently being undertaken within Lincolnshire on the viability of Churches. The previous St Helens Parochial Church Council (PCC now resigned) had requested that the PC help seek out interested parties to form a new Management committee for the Church (PCC). It was also noted that during the summer some trees had been damaged (some fallen) in strong winds & it appeared that help is needed within the grounds to prevent future damage or injury to personnel.

Q2. Why is your website not fully populated with all previous minutes & agendas?

A2. During the last 12 months a new website package has been purchased by Lincolnshire County Council & the old website format has been removed in 2021 due it no longer being able to be technically supported. This requires each council to be trained in its use before using. A basic format of the site has been populated with the help of Lincolnshire County Council & a 3<sup>rd</sup> party service provider is updating further information for many Parishes at this time. The Parish Website has been & continues to be an agenda item on minutes & will evolve over time.

Q3. When & why was the Angus energy planning application undertaken at the Unipen site with the potential for fracking gas in the village.

A3. The planning application was received by ELDC planning Department from Angus Energy in June 2020 (as dated on the Planning Portal). The application was to install a new section of pipeline to the existing pipeline which is between Saltfleetby Site & the former Theddlethorpe Gas Terminal (TGT). Because the TGT site is now demolished the new pipeline has been joined to the National Grid site. The application & posters were all posted as per the planning process on our public noticeboards. The PC Initially opposed their plan due to a number of concerns. Angus Energy came to the village & discussed those concerns in person & made some amendments. The PC then amended the objection to approval & resubmitted to the Planning Department. Angus Energy has shown professionalism & concern to the local area & community during the interaction.

The Chairman extended the Public Forum from 15 minutes to 65 minutes in duration to enable further discussion & transparency with the group.

### **GDF Site (Nuclear Waste Storage Facility)**

A range of concerns were raised including: the site would be detrimental to the environment, it would reduce house prices in the area, it would stop all tourism, it would damage the health of our children & grandchildren in an emergency, risk of flooding to the site, no railways, roads would become congested, damage to the sand dunes, a target for terrorism, GDF site will take over a mile of additional farm land around the site, damaging the farming community & impacted residents.

Statements made included:

There are Spies & Moles & former MEP's living in the village brought in a few years ago to undermine & manipulate the community into saying YES to a Nuclear Dumping Ground.

We don't want or need their money for this area, it is only a bribe & we want agricultural land as promised.

The Parish Council are not transparent & has been working underhandedly in supporting the proposal.

A member of the No Campaign, then made individual threats & physical gestures to all Parish, District & County Cllrs that NO is the only answer that matters & demanded that every Cllr states publicly their own personal point of view on the development.

The Chairman referred to the individual above as part of the leadership of the group, the group clarified to the Chairman & stated that the individual was not a leader of their group.

Questions continued:

Q4. It is understood that the Parish Councillors have either received personal or professional financial incentives from RWM.

A4. This was refuted & stated that this is not the case.

Q5. It is understood that Parish Councillors have been offered jobs or are being employed by RWM.

A5. Each Councillor stated in turn that they have not been employed or offered employment by RWM.

Q6. It had been directed at the Chairman that he hoped to be employed as site manager of the waste dump, which removed his impartiality, making him unfit to fulfil his role.

A6. The Chairman stated that in 20 years' time he would be 70 years old & retired!

Q7. It was asked what the Parish Councils position is on the GDF?

A7. The position of the Parish Council is that it remains neutral at this time, it is neither for or against. No informed decision can be made due to the current void of information that exists. This void naturally occurred due to the early news release via a whistle blower (our thanks to the whistle blower for bringing the issue to the public domain). It is the Parish Councils responsibility to enable every Parishioner to receive factually correct information, to make informed decisions & have a say on their future without fear of intimidation. Their views should be confidential & respected.

Q8. The community needs to be provided with information & that it should be made equally available to everyone.

A8. The Chairman concurred with the above request & re-confirmed again that the PC only wants factual information, not inaccurate information, with inaccurate conclusions formed at this time. Information so far has been from personal research only & from the other areas that are already in either working groups moving towards community partnership.

The PC stated that the electoral register could be used to send initial information to every resident within the Parish & the PC would work with RWM to ensure that community engagement takes place. But for this to happen the No Campaign will need to change their stance from the current “No to the formation of a working group” & accept that the appointment of the working group by Lincolnshire CC on the 5<sup>th</sup> October & then subsequently ELDC is the first step in getting Community engagement & the information that you all say you want.

There are steps within the National Policy that have to be worked through, with clear sections where everyone’s voices & votes can be exercised. Creating unrest within the community during these stages only damages people, our own friends & neighbours and damages parish life. If the working group is approved on the 5<sup>th</sup> October, then the PC would support the formation of a working group & would support local representation on that group.

The No Campaign then stated that no-one including Lincolnshire CC was listening to them & they would demonstrate at the meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> October.

The Chairman wished them luck & brought the public forum to a close at 8:35pm with approximately 1/2 of the members of public leaving.

#### **Item 09/21-03 Apologies & acceptance of absence**

Apologies had been received & accepted from Cllr Barbara Lister (available by video conference if needed), Cllr Patricia Brown.

#### **Item 09/21-04 Police Matters**

No representatives from the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team were present, no correspondence had been received.

#### **Item 09/21-05 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest from members in accordance with Localism Act 2011 - None.**

#### **Item 09/21-06 Approval of Minutes from the Meeting held on July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2021.**

Approval proposed by: Cllr J Shepperd & Seconded Cllr D Sears.

The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

#### **Item 09/21-07 District & County Councillor Reports**

County Cllr D McNally informed the PC of the following:

- 100 families would be part of the Afghanistan resettlement scheme in Lincolnshire.
- Shortage of PSV drivers in the County which currently has not affected bus & school bus services, but it could do in the future. Social Care Industry is also struggling recruiting staff & apprentices.
- There is no longer a requirement to book a timeslot at the recycling centres to dispose of your waste.

The Chairman asked the following:

- If the rolling plan for road & pavement repairs in the Parish was available to view from the last meeting – upcoming works can be found online, but not the 5-year rolling plan.
- Had the Lincolnshire CC cost been found for the road verge cutting for the Parish with a view for it to be recouped (if desired). – an exact figure wasn’t known but from experience of other areas who had requested this, the cost was negligible & not worth recouping.
- An update on the previous proposal of road calming measures from 2019 requested of Highways – No update or progression available. Cllr N Sears said she was due to meet someone from Highways & the Chairman was welcome to be involved with that meeting. Chairman accepted the invitation.

County Cllr N Sears informed the meeting of the following:

- Louth Hospital is not shutting down. County Council has requested additional NHS money to improve.
- New speed technology gun being tested.
- New section on the County Council website that shows upcoming programmed works.

District Cllr S Harrison informed the PC of the following:

- South Holland has joined the other councils to create 3 working Councils together & would be aligned in order to share resources & save expenditure over time.
- Currently only essential meetings are taking place at ELDC & with some working from home continued.
- Police are refocussing their efforts into Community Policing with separate officers for different areas or towns.
- Additional money has been given to the Citizen Advice Bureau as this essential service is expected to be used more frequently by local residents.
- Due to take place soon there will be health workshops for the unemployed at Mablethorpe Station Sports Centre, helping people to prepare to get back into employment.
- LIVES now have a new community car.

## **Item 09/21-08 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman addressed the remaining members of the public (MOPS) that a statement was to be read out covering the last 2 months, which they might not fully appreciate in some areas but the statement is factual.

### **1) Nuclear Waste Repository**

#### **a) No Campaigners**

I have met a representative of the No campaign in July & had several phone calls since. I have stated that we as a Parish Council support a person's or groups right to protest, but we asked the following of them.

- Do not turn neighbour against neighbour & please respect other peoples' views. Following the Covid-19 lockdowns we should be promoting community cohesion, coming together, not being driven apart, remaining in isolation.
- Please wait until the summer season is over before launching their campaign as to limit damage to Mablethorpe & Theddlethorpe business' as many have faced tough economic times due to Covid, & many businesses will be facing difficult times this winter.
- Please use the next few months wisely to gather accurate, factual information aiding the prevention of jumping to conclusions whilst trying to fill the current void of information. The process may take many years & the time to gain voting support will be years away.

I was left with the impression that this was accepted & reasonable.

- Weeks later I was asked questions with regards to road verges, installation of signs & posters etc. I explained that the verges formed part of Highways. If a personal injury or property damage occurred from those installations, then the persons installing such equipment would be liable & they install it at their own risk. The Parish Councils public liability insurance does not cover their installations.

#### **b) Parishioner Complaints**

I have received many phone calls and visits from residents with regard to the Nuclear Geological Disposal Facility, which fall into the following categories.

- Requests for accurate information be made available as soon as possible to read, listen, contemplate & then have their say. Many stated they didn't want a public meeting yet due to a lack of information & it was felt that the No Campaigners would dominate proceedings, disrupt the meeting & make people feel uncomfortable, so why bother at this time?
- Concerns raised included flood risk, reduction in house prices, environmental damage, site safety concerns, transportation of materials on roads & rail, potential damage to tourism etc. A lot of questions to be considered & answers are required in due course.
- Multiple Complaints with regards to the No Campaigners making people feel uncomfortable, the mass installation of posters & banners etc, which does their campaign a disservice. Concerns that the No Campaigners continue to publicly claim to represent the entire Parish (which it doesn't) & that their view is the only one that matters.

#### **c) RWM Interaction**

My first knowledge of the GDF site proposal was when I started to receive phone calls & text messages on the afternoon the story broke, July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021. Following that initial release of information, the subsequent neutral statements issued by ELDC & Lincolnshire County Council & considering early discussions with the No Campaigners, I made contact with RWM to find out what was going on & to become more informed.

- I had a meet & greet video conference with 2 RWM members who apologised for the information being released in the way that it was, they explained the current situation as known at that time, which also covered the national policy frame work & the process which RWM have to legally follow. Within that process there is a clear step that shows that members of the public get the final vote on the building of a GDF. The meeting was carried out in a professional & authentic manner.
- Since that meeting I have made several phone calls requesting updates against the process & requested accurate information be made available to our community as soon as possible when the process allows. Each member of our community deserves the opportunity to be presented with correct & factual information & more importantly have the opportunity to be heard without fear or concern.
- I have suggested that knowledge share & consultation could be based at the Village Hall over a number of weeks to give plenty of opportunity for people to attend & with that in mind a suitability & Covid assessment of the facilities has been carried out in anticipation of future interaction.

#### **d) Parish Council's current position & view on future representation**

It is the Parish Council's view that as a group we should remain impartial in order to support all our Parishioners by ensuring that the opportunity for factual information is secured & give every Parishioner the opportunity to be heard, with their views respected.

As the project would be of a national significance, it is our understanding that planning decisions would be at a national level & therefore they do not sit within the decision-making boundaries of the Parish Council. The final decision on whether a site is to be built or not sits with the "Test of Public Support" which is **YOUR** public vote.

As a Parish Council we believe it is essential that local representation is required to allow non-political local knowledge be presented into the process & for transparency of information. The Parish Councillors have agreed that if any working party or committees are formed in the future then it is our minimum expectation that we will be part of those groups & be represented.

It is our latest understanding (as we are aware) that Lincolnshire County Council officers last week voted to propose to the Lincolnshire County Council Executive Committee to consider supporting the formation of a working group. That proposal & any subsequent decision is due to take place on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Following that decision (if approved) the action below will take place.

The Parish Councillors have approved & given the mandate to accept the formation of a working group & have elected Cllr Carl Richardson to represent the PC by joining that group, reporting back to the Parish Council & our community in due course as required.

#### **2) Blue Hydrogen Plant**

No information has been received, no discussions have taken place with the PC, regarding a new processing facility at the Theddlethorpe Gas Terminal site. Any information known by the PC has been read from public sources such as Linked In. It is disappointing that Harbour energy or any of the companies reportedly involved seem to be so inconsiderate of the concern they have created following their media releases & have not treated the community as a stakeholder & shared their plans, however early in the development phase they are. The last update on the sites operation & future was presented in the Village Hall to Parishioners in May 2018.

#### **3) Gas Terminal Site**

In light of all the recent events we have suspended pursuing alternative uses for the site which have been worked on over the last 2 years following the Parish AGM in 2018. This was when the public agreed that alternative uses should be made of this Brownfield site. At that time, it was considered that letting the site return to agriculture was viewed as a waste at that time being detrimental to the area in terms of employment & financial impact. (Rural/Eco Tourism site, Business Enterprise Zone, educational facilities, ADR or solar farm power production, community care facilities etc). This has been communicated to our neighbouring communities & businesses who had shown interest in investing in the area.

#### **4) Standing Orders**

In line with the next review on May 2022 I have started reviewing an updating the standing orders of the Council with information from LALC. It is hoped to give councillors at least 8 weeks to review & discuss them prior to a formal vote at the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

## **5) Lindsey Marsh Drainage Board**

Following letters & communication sent to Victoria Atken MP with regards to concerns raised by members of the public on LMDB current practices, I am told that a letter has been received back from Defra requesting that any concerns on drainage, water courses or management thereof be brought up with the Independent Drainage board concerned. I have been requested to contact LMDB & request a meeting to raise the observations sent to our council over the past few years.

End of Statement

The Chairman reported that a national assessment had been carried out by Rural Services Network titled "Cultivating Rural Growth" looking at levelling up disadvantaged communities. Part of the summary is that Productivity, Standards of Living, Housing & Funding have all been inadequate supported in rural areas over a number of decades. The current equations used for calculating investment & spending per head of population is slanted towards investment in large populated areas. But the personal financial cost for rural communities to access basic services is disproportionately higher than that of the larger towns & cities. The Chairman will locate the report & send it to Councillors.

### **Item 09/21-09 Clerks Report**

With no Clerk currently employed there was no new information to share and all email correspondence had been previously circulated to Cllrs.

**Parish Councillor Co-option** – to respect the privacy of the applicant this item was moved to the end of the meeting without the public present, but the outcome is recorded here in its original agenda item spot.

The letter of intent along with the accompanying communications had previously been issued to all Parish Councillors & those councillors not present to deliberated the information, ask questions before the meeting & cast their votes. The letter of intent was read out and discussed further with those present.

The application was unsuccessful. The Chairman confirmed that he had made a commitment to the applicant to contact them following the meeting & outcome of the vote. The Parish Councillors wished to thank the applicant for the letter of intent & requested that verbal feedback on the application be given.

### **Item 09/21-10 Parish Councillor Reports**

Cllr C Lister – Fly tipping has been taking place around the Gas Terminal Site & pictures along with the information has been reported to ELDC.

### **Item 09/21-11 Matters arising Correspondence File**

None issued – online content emailed only due to the risk of spreading COVID through the transfer of hard material. This item will be removed from future agendas until a request to reinstate is received.

### **Item 09/21-12 Financial Matters**

#### **Expenditure for approval**

BHIB Council Insurance - £519.89 – approval proposed Cllr D Sears, seconded Cllr C Lister

A Taylor Grass cutting services - £810 – approval proposed Cllr J Shepperd, seconded Cllr D Sears

A review of the Statement of Accounts against Bank statements was carried out & confirmed as correct.

#### **Financial Update**

The purchase card requested in previous months has yet to materialise from Lloyds Bank, following completion of the documentation mandates issued as per their process. The Lloyds propose & approve payment system has been used last month for the first time & lessons learnt include that the approval needs to be carried out within 1 working day or it disappears without informing either party.

Following this item Cllr C Lister left the meeting.

### **Item 09/21-13 St Helens Church**

The request to seek potential new PCC management of the Church was fulfilled with no interested parties emerging.

The request for a working group to tackle the tree issues previously reported & tidy up of the area initially identified interested parties but as the dates were then publicised most couldn't commit & also due to a positive CoviD case the event was cancelled.

Cllr S Harrison offered to send information of the ELDC tree preservation group & that a survey at the cost of the Parish Council should be carried out.

#### **Item 09/21-14 Village Hall**

At the Village Hall meeting attended in August the public, it had been requested that the Parish Council consider increasing next year's precept to include taking on the payments for improved upkeep & grass cutting of the playing fields. The projected cost would be an increase of approx. £2k based on 6 cuts a year.

#### **Item 09/21-15 CoviD Community Recovery**

Discussions held with regards to ideas relating to supporting the safe gathering of the community & rebuild community interaction again.

Proposals were unanimously approved for the Parish Council to sponsor a Christmas event at the Village Hall (more precise details will follow in when developed).

A request to look into the installation of a permanent Christmas tree on common land with electrical installation for illuminations to be explored.

#### **Item 09/21-16 Planning Matters:**

No new applications are on the planning portal.

#### **Item 09/21-17 Highway / Footpath / Lighting Matters**

A discussion took place about various footpaths & roads reported via fix my street to the County Council & either not repaired or repaired badly.

The Chairman has accepted an invitation to attend the Mablethorpe Highways Strategy Workshop in Mablethorpe & the posters of the event were installed on all noticeboards. Feedback at the next meeting will be given.

#### **Item 97/21-18 Road Safety**

The 10 x LED sign backplates have arrived last week & would be installed in October along with the community speed watch signage purchased from Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership.

It is hoped that a meeting with Highways Management will take place on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **Item 09/21-19 Parish on-going issues & general maintenance**

- **Millennium Stone** – Suitable location, followed by relocation still required.
- **Information Boards** – No further progress.
- **Litter Club** – Litter pick to be resurrected post summer season.

#### **Item 09/21-20 Reports from Outside Bodies**

A reminder that the Charity of Mrs Elizabeth Rook is able to be used to support good community causes. Money from the Gayton Le Marsh wind farm project goes to this charity with recent support given to the Village Hall & young person's attending university. Grant applications are available from the Parish Council with hard copies displayed at the Village Hall.

A halt has been called to alternative uses for the Theddlethorpe Gas Terminal site as detailed in the Chairman's Report.

#### **Item 09/21-21 Parish Correspondences'**

The Parish Post newsletter has been postponed due to CoviD, the current delivery method was by hand to all properties within the area. Alternative delivery measures need to be considered if this is to continue again – not just the Parish Website as the area is digitally challenged with many residents not on the internet.

Parish Website – the new site is up & running in a basic format. Not all information has been populated with but the Chairman will resend the information. Ideas for the site will continually need to be discussed over time.

**09/21-22 To Resolve the Date of the next Monthly Parish Council Meeting**

The next meeting will be held in the Village Hall, Silver Street on October 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm.

They're being no other business; the Chairman closed the meeting at 10:05pm.