

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THORNBURY GROUP PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON MONDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025, AT 7 PM IN EDWYN RALPH VILLAGE HALL**

**Members Present:** Cllrs A Ede (Chair), K Edwards, T Edwards, J Farrant, W Keown-Boyd, and D Manning.

**Also, Present:** J. Eva (Clerk), Ward Cllr Baker, and 2 members of the public.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Cllrs H Lewis, A Pitt, and P Wildig.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Correction: to Cllr W Keown-Boyd's initial from H to W.

It was **RESOLVED** with the above amendment that the minutes for the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. WARD COUNCILLOR REPORT – Herefordshire Council (HC)**

Cllr Baker provided a brief update which included the following points.

- Devolution – Herefordshire Council (HC) is exploring options to link up with a neighbouring authority, in line with Government plans for devolution in England.
- Code of Conduct – A new Civility and Respect pledge has been introduced following a report highlighting increased complaints involving councillors against other councillors at local councils, including parish, town, and city councils.
- National Empty Homes Week (3-9 March) – Aims to inform Herefordshire residents on what to do about any property in their community that has been left empty for more than six months.
- Winter gritting regime – Cllr Baker recently attended a briefing session at the Balfour Beatty depot, where a presentation was given about the winter gritting regime on Herefordshire's roads. HC has invested in weather forecasting technology to make gritting plans more efficient and reduce unnecessary costs.
- Avian Flu – Cases are on the rise in the county, and bird keepers are encouraged to follow official Government advice.
- Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) – A guide to mineral extraction and waste management in the county up to 2041 and beyond.
- Parish Council Summit – Will take place at Plough Lane on 8th April.
- Ofsted monitoring visit – Took place on 18-19 February 2025. Since the last visit in October 2024, the local authority has made progress in improving services for vulnerable children.
- World Suicide Prevention Day (Tuesday 10 September) – HC will participate in the UK's largest suicide prevention initiative when the Baton of Hope visits. This national campaign aims to raise awareness, foster hope, and inspire actions to reduce suicide rates.
- New Chief Constable of West Mercia Police – Richard Cooper was officially confirmed in the role on 19th March 2025, after serving as Temporary Chief Constable since August 2023.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

**Question:** A resident expressed concern that the parish's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) may be adversely affected and its influence diminished due to changes in the planning

system. She asked whether the former NDP steering group is still in existence should the plan need to be revised in the future.

**Answer:** The Chairman acknowledged the resident's concerns and explained that a Parish NDP operates in conjunction with the county's Local Plan (LP). HC was in the process of preparing the LP 2021–2041 when, in December 2024, the Government updated the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), increasing the county's mandatory housing targets. As a result, HC decided to halt further work on the Draft Regulation 18 Local Plan, as a new spatial strategy is required to accommodate the significant increase in housing growth. Advice from HC indicates that plans such as the Edwyn Ralph NDP, which is less than five years old, remain current and continue to carry significant weight. The parish NDP was adopted in March 2023. The parish council is monitoring the situation and will engage with residents if any revisions to the plan are required.

**Question:** A resident commented on the increase in dog fouling on footpaths, particularly in the grounds of the village hall. As the village hall grounds are a popular play area for young children, it was suggested that the Village Hall Management Committee may consider prohibiting dog walking on the grounds.

The parish council recognises that most residents are responsible dog owners who clean up after their pets. However, unfortunately, a small minority are failing to do so, which is having a negative impact on the wider community.

**Question:** A resident raised a question of a sensitive nature and requested the council's advice.

## 6. PLANNING

- a. To comment on local planning applications for determination by Herefordshire Council.  
P250621/J ... Oakdene, Edwyn Ralph, Bromyard, HR7 4LX

Proposed reduction to upper crown and lateral branches (by approx. 2m) of two Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), to maintain the size of the trees to their surroundings and to rebalance the crown from previous pruning.

Type: Works to trees covered by TPO.

It was **RESOLVED** to SUPPORT this application.

- b. Members noted the following planning application approved with conditions by HC.  
Land East of The Old Cross Farmhouse, Edwyn Ralph, Bromyard.  
DESCRIPTION: Proposed 2 no. self-contained glamping pods for guest use, service cabin with bike store, refuse and recycling facilities and parking/turning area. 3 parking bays proposed within the site, one being an EV charging bay. Associated footpaths and landscaping. To be connected to an existing private drainage system.

*Cllr Baker left the meeting at 7:45pm.*

## 7. FINANCE

- a. Members considered the latest finance report, which included bank statements, reconciliations, and spend to date.

Current Account total: £4,283.68

Reserve Account total: £846.23

- b. To approve invoices for payment.  
i. Autela ... payroll 15252 ... £102.33  
ii. HMRC ... PAYE ... £170.85

iii. J Eva ... Clerk's salary for March.

It was **RESOLVED** that the payments listed above be approved via bank transfer.

c. Internal Audit 2024/25

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint R Mullet as the internal auditor, £200. The Chairman signed the letter of engagement.

**8. Parish Council Insurance**

Members considered the renewal quotations received.

It was **RESOLVED** to renew the cover with the Council's existing provider Zurich, at an annual cost of £379.62.

**9. ROADS / FOOTPATHS**

Members considered any matters relating to local highways or footpaths that need to be reported to Herefordshire Council.

In some areas where the B4214 have recently been resurfaced are starting to break up along the edges of the road. Some repairs have been made. Parish Councillors and residents can report any new issues that arise directly to HC.

Cllr Farrant has met with the Locality Steward regarding highway flooding in Collington. The Locality Steward is working to ease this issue and reduce water buildup on the road.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE – to note correspondence received and consider any action.**

- i. Advice from the Monitoring Officer regarding Civility and Respect in Public Office and to consider what action the Council wishes to take.
- ii. Locality Steward's Weekly Briefings.
- iii. Parish Summit – Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2025.
- iv. Street works – weekly lists.
- v. Invitation - second Flood Group meeting - Tuesday 25 March 6.30-7.30pm.

**11. NEXT ORDINARY MEETING**

- i. It was noted that the scheduled date of the Annual Meeting falls on a bank holiday, so will be rescheduled to 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025, 7:15 PM, ER Village Hall. The Annual Parish meeting will take place from 7pm.
- ii. Items for the next meeting – members can contact the clerk via email with any suggestions for the next meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was closed at 8:20pm

Signed by Cllr Ashley Ede ..... Dated .....