THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 29 July 2026 commencing at 6.10pm in the Community Library, Norton Road, Thurston.

In the Chair: Cllr. Dashper. Present: Cllrs. Balaam, Bond (arrived at 6.19pm), Marsh, Rainbow, and West. In Attendance: Mrs L Border, Clerk and Mrs V Waples, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) (Minutes were taken by the Responsible Financial Officer)

The Chair declared the meeting open at 6.10pm and thanked all for attending.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING AND APOLOGIES

The Chair formally opened the meeting at 6.00pm, advising all that the Protocol adopted by the Parish Council for reporting at Parish Council Meetings, would be taken as read. A copy of the Protocol for recording at meetings can be downloaded from the website

a) Council to receive apologies for absence – verified apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Moy.
b) Council to accept apologies received - Councillors resolved to accept the apology for absence as submitted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM COUNCILLORS INCLUDING GIFTS OF HOSPITALITY EXCEEDING £50 –

a) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests; other registerable and non-registerable interests as detailed in Appendix B of the LGA Model Code of Conduct – there were no interests declared for the meeting.
b) To receive notification of gifts or hospitality exceeding £50 – there were none submitted.
c) To note the determination of requests for dispensations in accordance with Council's Dispensation Policy – there were none to be reported as having been determined.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: (all as previously circulated):

a) To receive and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 18 February 2026 as previously circulated - **it was resolved to approve the minutes as previously circulated and the Chair signed the minutes as a true and accurate record of the proceedings that took place.**

4. TO REVIEW AND ADOPT THE FOLLOWING POLICIES:

a) Parish Council Office Risk Assessment 2026 (Confidential paper) including recommendations – the revisions to the policy were noted. **It was resolved to adopt the revised assessment as written,** noting the recommendation to be placed before Council at the meeting of 5th August 2026 for the implementation of an integration door entry access system to the front door and the installation of a CCTV surveillance in the rear corridor.
b) Parish Council Continuity Business Plan 2026 (Confidential paper) – the revisions

to the policy were noted. It was resolved to adopt the revised plan with the addition of the employment of a Locum (via SALC) should the Clerk role become vacant post the probation period. The location of secure documents was noted.

c) Newsletter Advertising Policy – the RFO spoke to the changes that had brought about the need for amendment to the policy previously adopted. **It was resolved to adopt the revised policy as written for immediate implementation.**

d) Newsletter Editorial Policy – the RFO spoke to the changes that had brought about the need for amendments to the policy previously adopted. All noted that the Editorial Team (formed to create a panel to mediate where necessary) had been expanded to include the Chair, Responsible Financial Officer and the Editor. It was **resolved to adopt the revised policy as written for immediate implementation.**

e) Lone Working Policy – the RFO spoke of the need to update the current document due to changes in legislation and practices. The NALC template had been used to adapt the current policy thereby ensuring that it was suited for both employees and volunteers. It was **resolved to accept the policy as written with immediate effect.**

f) Vexatious Complainant Policy – the Clerk spoke as to the reasoning behind the police; how complaints would be handled with reassurances that these would be consistently applied with the policy expanded to include staff, councillors and volunteer. It was noted that it was necessary to ensure that all had appropriate access to services the council provides and that this would not negate the need to respond to requests for information submitted under existing legislation. The scope of the policy would set the standard of behaviours as to how to communicate; what will be tolerated and the manner in which issues are dealt with. The policy provided a definitions of the disproportionate burden and the legislation that would be referenced in determining disproportionate burdens /disruption. It was **resolved to adopt the policy as written effect.**

5. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) To receive the paper as submitted by the Responsible Financial Officer on the Council's Financial Portfolio in accordance with Council's Investment Strategy - The RFO reported on the Council's business banking arrangements and the deposits held with various financial institutions. The Council's priorities for investment were noted - security, liquidity, return and ethical banking that represented the council's commitment to climate emergency.

b) To consider further measures to protect the council's financial assets in accordance with council's Investment Strategy – the RFO reported on how the Council should consider managing its monies with regards to cash flow requirements, fund diversification and investment optimisation.
With reference to the submitted report, it was resolved that

- the Lloyds 186 days Term, at maturity date, be increased to £100,000 for a 12month term at current rate of 2.2%;
- an account be opened with Hampshire Trust Bank in the amount of £120,000 in a 1-year fixed bond online fixed saver with an AER of 4.31

- That council invests, as an initial investment, in the Public Sector Deposit Fund a sum of £200,000. This sum would comprise the Council's general reserves and a proportion of its earmarked reserves. Current indicative returns are between 3% and 4% interest per month, with interest payable directly into a nominated bank account. Funds deposited can be withdrawn with one day's notice, providing flexibility and liquidity for the Council's financial management.

It was further agreed that the RFO would actively manage the bank accounts held in the name of the parish council with Unity Trust, Redwood and Lloyds. The committee was informed that once the above arrangements became live, the council's adopted Standing Orders and Investment Strategy would need to be updated to reflect the changes.

c) To note update on banking arrangements, including the bank mandate – all received the paper submitted and noted the bank mandate status updates.

6. TO REVIEW AND ADOPT THE FOLLOWING

a) Council's Three-Year Business Plan for 2025-2028 (following amendments) – deferred until the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting.

7. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING MATTERS FROM COUNCIL'S OFFICERS:

a) Review of the Practitioner's Guide – having reviewed the submitted paper, it was resolved that knowledge of the guide would assist with the knowledge of governance and decision-making responsibilities by ensuring that there was:

- Improved understanding – Councillors would gain insight into how policies, procedures, or services are delivered in practice.
- Better-informed decisions – Councillors would understanding operational realities can help councillors make more effective strategic decisions.
- Consistency and transparency – by sharing the same guidance, there would be a promotion of a common understanding between elected members and officers.
- Enhanced scrutiny – Councillors could more effectively challenge, question, and support service delivery when they understand the framework practitioners work within.

It was **resolved that the Practitioners Guide 2026 be noted and that the document and the Good Councillors Guide to Finance (2025) be shared with all members of the council.**

8. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

a) 18th November 2026 commencing at 6.00pm in the Community Library, Norton Road unless legislation requires a further meeting.

9. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

a) There being no other business the meeting was closed at 7.16pm.

Signed... Date: 18 November 2026