

# **Toppesfield Parish Council**

## **Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting Held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2012 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 8.00pm**

### **1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:**

#### **The following Councillors were in attendance:**

Peter Moore – Chairman  
Andrew Bull  
Alan Collard  
Shaun Sheldrake  
John Levick  
David Bagnall

#### **Also in attendance:**

Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council  
3 Members of the public

#### **12/1 Apologies were received from**

Councillor Clare Condie and Malcolm Braithwaite

#### **12/2 Declaration of Members Interest on Agenda items**

Councillor Moore declared an interest in the 'Bradfields' Planning application

#### **12/3 Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council**

Ann Read reported that she had met with Adam Jenkins from the P3 scheme and has been shown how to survey footpaths and identity areas that need work. Due to the number of footpaths this will take some time to complete. Problems such as missing way markers we can do ourselves but enforcement issues will be down to Essex County Council. Following the foot path temporary closure notices being placed in the notice boards Ann has placed a copy of the O.S. map highlighting the footpaths effected. Actual dates of closures will be notified to Ann read and Kaaren Berry. Peter Moore thanked Ann Read for doing the maps of the footpaths.

A parishioner questioned the pump repairs stating a lot of areas are pegged and have not been replaced. It was also mentioned that joints still need to be tightened. Peter Moore replied that English Heritage would not allow replacement so peg system used and reclaimed pine has been used in the top of the frame work. There is still work to be carried out as the project is not yet completed.

#### **12/4 Village Plan**

##### **Introduction**

VANTAGE is now disbanded and the Village Plan formally handed over to the PC for implementation. Both were carried out at the 'launch meeting' on 16<sup>th</sup> July. Mandated by the PC and summarised by the Chairman in the introduction: "*The Village Plan came about in January 2009 because the then newly appointed team of councillors wanted to change the way things had been done in the past. .... To achieve this we needed some goals and a blueprint for the future. This had to come from (you), the Community, as a considered reflection on how we wanted our Village to grow.*"

##### **Implementation**

The VP document provides a consensus overview of the opinions of a considerable number of villagers as to what matters to them. The brief has been fulfilled and now the hard work starts.

The “newly appointed team of councillors” now has its blueprint for the future. Set out in the Plan, is a collection of realistic, achievable projects with timescales appended. Also in the project tables, those who can influence the realisation of the programme are also identified. The PC now has a method “to change the way things had been done in the past”.

The whole programme needs ‘leadership’, which is clearly the role of the PC, and a mechanism for monitoring and measuring progress towards the wants and aspirations of the villagers. However, it was never intended that the Parish Councillors be the people to do the work to implement the Plan. That rôle is for interested village residents to fulfil.

### **Rôles of Villagers**

An innovative feature of the Plan is that groups of people to do the work have already been identified and detailed milestones set. There are two exceptions: that of the Ecology and Environmental Group. An early task is to identify and adopt a leader. Parts of the relevant plan are underway and individuals have been identified to work on other parts. However, the group needs a leader; and Social and Community (securing amenities and assets and car parking) where the Parish Council has been identified as the lead organisation.

In no particular order, the groups and leaders are:

Transport and Traffic – Richard Evers, Social & Community – (Parish Council),  
Leisure and Recreation – Andrew Bull, Broadband – Jonathan Burchell, Footpaths – Ann Read  
Youth Council – Alan Collard, Economy & Employment (Business Directory/Toppesfield Local Website) – Graham Berry, Ecology and Environment – TBA

The groups might be sub-committees of the Parish Council, with a specific Parish Councillor nominated to oversee the activities of a specific sub-committee.

Rather, it is proposed that organisation of the groups is formalised in some way and ‘groups with actual members’ be established. Loose associations are in place, but to involve more of the residents, it might be appropriate to form clubs/societies. The Village Hall is the ideal location to meet and the Village Hall trustees might like to take some proactive role in formation of such clubs. Guidance is certainly needed.

### **Monitoring progress**

Timescales have been set in the Plan, but it is probable that unless there is some regular reporting on progress, little will be achieved. Therefore, a monthly reporting slot on the PC agenda would be a possible mechanism to achieve this. The Annual Parish Meeting is the mechanism by which the whole Parish can be kept informed and involved on progress.

### **Conclusions**

A number of residents have committed a great deal of time in preparing the Plan and every household has received a copy of the Plan. Further copies are being sent out to other interested parties. The Parish website carries a full copy of the Plan with clear bookmarks for easy access. There is a clear ‘blueprint’ in place and many will be interested in the implementation.

Peter Moore to contact each group leader to report back at parish council meetings on a rolling basis.

### **12/5 Minutes of the last meeting:**

The minutes of the meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012 were approved and signed by the chair as being an accurate record of the meeting.

### **12/6 Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

No matters arising were raised.

## **12/7 Actions from Previous Meeting:**

- 12/7.1 Peter Moore to chase up the builder commissioned for the repairs to the Pump House – works started but not completed yet.
- 12/7.2 Kaaren Berry to forward accounts summary and asset register to Ray – information forwarded.
- 12/7.3 Andrew Bull to re- challenge invoice from Paul Clark Printing – cheques paid and cost of a 20 page document is £625.00
- 12/7.4 Andrew Bull to meet with the chair of governors at the School regarding the leaning tree by the school entrance and the Church wall – Andrew has arranged a meeting with Braintree District Council tree warden for their advice and to have the works signed off.
- 12/7.5 Shaun Sheldrake to forward pictures of the accident to Peter Moore / Kaaren Berry to progress insurance claim – pictures were forwarded.
- 12/7.6 David Bagnall, Alan Collard and Kaaren Berry to look further into Quality Status – see item 12.
- 12/7.7 All Councillors to read the Code of Conduct and respond to Kaaren Berry - no objections received.
- 12/7.8 Andrew Bull and Kaaren Berry to look into planning permission for the beacon – LARG (Leisure And Recreation Group) have suggested that the beacon is reduced to 5metres and then would not require planning permission. This will be discussed at their next meeting.
- 12/7.9 Andrew Bull to obtain quotes for the hedge by the pavilion adjacent to the school – also to be discussed at the LARG meeting next week as a working party may be able to progress this.
- 12/7.10 Andrew Bull to forward to Kaaren Berry a list of those invoiced for advertising in the newsletter – not yet passed over but the last bills requested payments are sent direct to Kaaren Berry. It was questioned how we can increase revenue on the newsletter. Andrew reported that research show the advert prices were to high therefore the cost has been reduced.
- 12/7.11 Kaaren Berry to follow up on spillage and if waterways are now safe – due to amount of rain and time past no additional risks to pets would be present.
- 12/7.12 Andrew Bull to contact Paul Chinery regarding grass cutting in The Causeway – cutting has been carried out but no invoice received yet.

## **12/8 Transport / Highways Issues**

The 30 mph has been signed off and funding approved but still no further progression from Essex County Council. Requests have been received to lower the speed limit along Church Lane to 20mph, it was agreed that we should obtain the 30mph first.

## **12/9 Planning**

- 12/9.1 Application No: 12/01036 - Weybridge Bungalow, Stambourne Road, Great Yeldham, Erection of a one and a half storey side extension. No objections received.
- 12/9.2 Application No: 12/01035 – Bradfields, Harrow Hill, Toppesfield – Continued use of agricultural land to garden. No objections received.
- 12/9.3 Application No: 12/00041/NMA - 22 Park Lane, Toppesfield - Application for a non-material amendment 12/00250/FUL - Amendments to windows and doors. Permission already given by Braintree District Council.

## **12/10 Village Pump Repairs**

The repairs are in line with English Heritage instructions. Peter Moore has spoken to Hedingham Buses regarding the second incident. They require another estimate for the additional works. Peter will contact the contractor to see if English Heritage need to be contacted again. The Strapping of the legs of the pump house was questioned as the concrete plinths are not held down do they need to be strapped – again Peter to speak to the contractor. Work is still in progress.

## **12/11 Village Hall Update Report**

No meeting has been held since the last report but work has started on the patio area and the revised kitchen plan has been issued for comment.

## **12/12 Quality Council and Competence Status**

David reported that a meeting with the Birbrook's clerks held. It was felt that this is an appropriate thing to do but would take 12 – 18 months to complete. Costs not totally known yet as councillor will be training be required. Councils are being encouraged to achieve Quality Status as it shows to parishioners that we are a competent council. Action Plan to be prepared for the next meeting including timelines.

It was felt that Quality Status should be look before looking into Competence Status.

## **12/13 Code of Conduct**

It was agreed that all councillors would sign the new code of conduct at the next meeting and complete the new register of interest forms.

## **12/14 Broadband**

Lloyd from County Broadband was to provide revised contractual information to Peter prior to this meeting but this has not yet been received.

## **12/15 Recreational Areas:**

12/15.1 Progression on tree/hedge quotes and works - this is being taken to LARG next week.

12/15. 2 Improvements to public open spaces – Andrew will take this to LARG for discussion and report back at the next parish council meeting.

## **12/16 Financial Accounts:**

12/16.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval – payments approved. Peter Moore requested Kaaren to purchase a second fixing set for the memorial bench. Also Kaaren to email actuals v budget sheet to all councillors prior to the meeting. Peter also asked Alan to give a budget update at the next meeting expenditure v's Plan.

12/16.2 Payments to Paul Clark Printing previously held – update on challenge. Payments agreed and paid.

12/16.3 Changes in Council Tax Benefit – details circulated. In 2008 28 properties in the parish were in receipt of Council Tax Benefit so this would not affect a large number within the parish. However, David to write a response on behalf of the council stating a capped reduction of benefit would be a fairer way and then forward to Kaaren.

12/16.4 Change of signature of account – remove Councillor Laskowski and add Councillor Collard – it was agreed for Alan to become replace Fran Laskowski as signature following his resignation. Forms to be passed to Alan for completion.

12/16.5 Quotation for Newsletter – a new quote from Paul Clark has been received at £450 along with quotations from Spingold ranging from £163 to £392 depending on paper used and number of pages in each issue. Following discussions and a power cut samples could not be seen so Andrew to compare products and report back at the next meeting.

**12/17 Correspondence:**

- 12/17.1 Essex County Council – Temporary closures of footpaths and bridleways – posters displayed.
- 12/17.2 House of Commons – posters with Brooks Newmark contact details – posters displayed.
- 12/17.3 The Playing Field publication – summer Edition available if required.
- 12/17.4 RCCE Oyster Magazine – Issue 33 available if required.
- 12/17.5 Glasdon – litter and dog bin sale leaflet received.
- 12/17.6 Clerks and Councils Direct – July 2012 received if required.
- 12/17.7 National Grid – Community Forum minutes, action log and Connection Options Report Presentation and available for reading.
- 12/17.8 Essex County Council – Winter Salt Scheme – does the Parish Council wish to take part again. It was agreed to take part again and ask for salt now as stock may run low later.
- 12/17.9 Essex County Council – Superfast broadband website links – pass onto Peter Moore.
- 12/17.10 EALC – County update and training courses.
- 12/17.11 Countryside Voice publication – summer edition – Peter Moore taken publication for reading.
- 12/17.12 Essex County Council - Bus Passenger News, no changes to Toppesfield Service

**12/18 Any Other Business:**

To discuss any other business / items for the next agenda

Late correspondence arrivals BDVSA AGM invite for September 2012.  
Essex County Council Sustainable Drainage System Design and Adoption Guide.

**20. Date and Time of the next meeting:**

The next Parish Council meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2012 at 8.00pm, at Toppesfield Village Hall.

**21. Close:**

The meeting was closed at 9.10pm.

.....  
Chairman

.....  
Date

**Action Summary:**

- Peter Moore to contact village plan group members inviting them to Parish Council meetings on a rolling basis to report progress.**
- Peter Moore to speak to the contractor regarding the strapping of the pump house legs and whether English Heritage need to be contacted again regarding the second incident.**
- Andrew Bull to meet with BDC tree warden re leaning tree near the school gates.**
- David Bagnall, Alan Collard and Kaaren Berry to produce actin plan for Quality Status.**
- Andrew Bull to report back from LARG re hedge/tree works and open space plan.**
- Kaaren Berry to purchase a second fixing set for the memorial bench.**
- David Bagnall to prepare response to BDC re Council Tax Benefit proposals.**
- Alan Collard to give a budget update at the next meeting expenditure v's Plan**
- Kaaren Berry to pass forms to Alan Collard to change signatories with Barclays.**

Appendix A

Accounts – 9<sup>th</sup> August 2012

National Savings Deposit Account:	£	£
Balance as at 5 March 2012	2508.27	
Community Account Statement Balance as at 31 July 2012		11864.28
Subtotal:	2508.27	11864.28

If all previously issued cheques cashed / receipts cleared balance should be;

	Total	11312.28
Income Received - to be paid by BACS – VAT repayment (Remittance advice received 09.08.12)		903.80

Payments to be approved:

Chq No:		
101383	Springold Graphics – Village Plan Printing	795.00
101384	Chelmer Precision Ltd – Repair to Cast Iron Sign Post	96.00
101385	Shaun Sheldrake – Flags for Pump - Jubilee	67.65
101386	Paul Clark Printing – Newsletter July/August	625.00
101387	E.on – supply to changing rooms	16.85
101388	Alan Preston – maintenance of green areas	55.00
101389	K. Berry – Bench fixings	30.99
101390	The Red Barrows – Jubilee Event	150.00
101391	Dusty Millar – Jubilee Event	168.00
101392	Mrs Z Hughes – Jubilee Event	29.66
101393	Mrs K Berry – Jubilee Event	30.50
101394	mh-p – website updates	54.00
101395	M. J. Braithwaite	48.22
101396	Toppesfield Village Hall Committee – VP Launch	10.00
101382	K. Berry July's wages	198.47

2375.34

Bank Charges will be deducted on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2012 5.00

Balance	2508.27	9835.74
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Last bank statement received up to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012.