



# Toppesfield Parish Council



## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 8.00pm

### 15/116. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

#### The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Andrew Bull - Chairman  
Councillor Dave Dyson – Vice Chairman  
Councillor Linda Bowen  
Councillor Andrea Chinery  
Councillor Mike James  
Councillor Alan Preston

#### Also in attendance:

Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

#### Apologies were received from:

Paul Thompson  
Richard van Dulken

### 15/117. Declaration of Members Interest on Agenda items:

No declaration of members interests were made at this point.

### 15/118. Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council:

No members of the public were present.

Councillor Bull read out the following report from Cllr Richard van Dulken:

My apologies for being unable to attend tonight – you will have gathered that there will be on-going diary conflict with Gt. Yeldham Parish Council, who have their meetings on the same night as yours, and I had accepted their invitation first. I will aim to be with you at your next meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

I am still finding my feet in the new environment of BDC so further apologies if this initial report seems a bit thin, but I am sure that you and our constituents will tell me where they think I am going wrong!

As you are all aware I think, following the recent reorganisation of the BDC Wards – in order to reduce the number of Councillors from 60 to 49, and hence reduce costs – the new YELDHAM WARD takes in Toppesfield and Gainsford End, Stambourne and Gt. Yeldham plus some outlying areas. At BDC level you may also have gathered that Conservative Cllr. Graham Butland has been re-appointed as Leader, in a situation where the Conservatives hold 44 of the 49 seats, i.e. about 90%. In comparison, from 2011 to 2015 the Conservatives held about 70% of the seats. This is really just for information and will not make any change to the way BDC is run. The Conservative Group controlling the BDC has given an undertaking that it will not abuse its position of control and has in fact made great efforts to include other parties in Committees and as observers in The Cabinet.

A few points to bring up:

1. I am following up the Planning Application to remove Condition 3 from the Pumphouse Brewery original application, and have I met with Alan Collard to discuss this and wider matters relating to the community enterprises in the village. We are hopeful of success in having the Condition removed.

2. I note in your Agenda that you make mention of Neighbourhood Watch Newsletters – this is an issue in which I am very interested, if only because I live only a few miles away and am as conscious as you of what appears to be an increase in vehicle and property theft in our region. I would like to try to promote a number of related issues such as membership of Neighbourhood Watch itself, and the use of internet by residents to receive the newsletters as well as subscribing to relevant Facebook pages (Essex police for example), and if you have any ideas to facilitate this I will be pleased to hear them.
3. I was hoping to hear from you as to how the new 333 bus service is working out, and will try to find an occasion to use it myself from Castle Hedingham to Sudbury. From all accounts it is a welcome addition to the sparse local transport options.
4. You are perhaps aware that there is no increase in the BDC portion of the Council Tax for 2015/16, as has been the pattern in recent years,
5. Regarding housing, despite the scare stories you may read in the papers, BDC is still aiming to meet the government targets with an achievable addition of 750-950 new homes per annum in coming years and not “swamp” the District as it has been maintained in the press. Our area, with the two estates being planned in Great Yeldham, and the Premdor site in Sible Hedingham, is already doing a lot towards the annual targets and the challenge is for schools, medical facilities and other infrastructure to keep pace with a growing population.

Cllr. Richard van Dulken, BDC Yeldham Ward

#### **15/119. Minutes of the last meeting:**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were approved and signed by the chair as being an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **15/120. Matters Arising:**

A report from the District Valuer has been received regarding the land behind The Green Man Pub. As a result of the report the Parish Council are in agreement to proceed with the purchase and instruct a solicitor. This is within budget. This was proposed by Councillor Dyson and Seconded by Councillor James.

#### **15/121. Actions from previous meeting:**

- 15/121.1 Councillor Dyson and Kaaren Berry to look into the Public Works Loan Board guidance and procedures. Some information has been gained by Kaaren Berry and Councillor Dyson will look into this further.
- 15/121.2 Councillor Bull to seek a quote for repainting the Village Gates – this has not yet been received.
- 15/121.3 Kaaren Berry to seek a quote for the removal of the existing noticeboard at Camoise Close and the installation of the new noticeboard in its place. Quote received but will be considered under agenda item 15/124.2.

#### **15/122. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council**

- 15/122.1 Adoption of Sub Committees and Working Groups (Paper to be presented on the evening). A paper was presented on the evening and given to all Councillors for consideration prior to the next meeting.
- 15/122.2 Elect representatives for the Charities, Village Hall, Tree Warden, Communications, Village Plan and Allotments. It was agreed that Tony Davison and Dusty Millar remain as representatives for the Charities. Councillor Chinery and Councillor Dyson will be village hall representatives, Fran Laskowski and Rob Sullivan will be the Tree wardens. Councillor Bull will head communications and all councillors will be responsible for the Village Plan. It was also agreed that Paul Thompson will be the representative for the allotments.

### **15/123. Correspondence:**

- 15/123.1 Braintree District Council – Choice Based Breakfast Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at Braintree District Council Offices. Overview of how affordable housing is let through choice based lettings.
- 15/123.2 Braintree District Council – Funding for Parish Councils for health related projects that help reduce pressure on local health services. This was passed to Councillor Dyson to look into.
- 15/123.3 Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter - it was agreed to put this onto the parish council website each week.
- 15/123.4 Braintree District Council – Rest Awareness Workshop – 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at Braintree Town Hall.
- 15/123.5 Proposal to expand Cressing Primary School – proposal to expand to a capacity of 210 places. No comments were made regarding this proposal.
- 15/123.6 Essex County Council – Getting Around Essex – bus and passenger transport strategy. Sharing of the outcomes of the recent consultation.
- 15/123.7 Society of Local Council Clerks – Courses and roadshows, information available on their website.

### **Late Correspondence:**

- Mh-p website Analytical Report May 2015 received.
- BDVSA – update on different courses, grants and events received.
- EALC – request for nominations to Buckingham Palace Garden Party was received.
- EALC – County Update received. This will be forwarded to all Councillors.

### **15/124. Financial Accounts:**

- 15/124.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. These were approved and signed. It was also agreed that Councillor Dave Dyson and Councillor Mike James become signatories to the account. Councillor Bull mention that the clerks salary should be reviewed. Kaaren Berry to supply national pay- scale information.
- 15/124.2 Quote to install new noticeboard on the corner of Camoise Close and remove the existing one. Quote has been received but it was agreed that further quotes are gained. Councillor Preston to seek further quotes for this project.

### **15/125. Defibrillator Machines:**

Discussion on purchasing defibrillator machines for the parish. Some information has been supplied by Shaun Sheldrake but it was agreed to try to get the suppliers to come and talk to the Parish Council further regarding this.

### **15/126. Purchase of Land behind The Green Man, Toppesfield.**

- 15/126.1 Update on Purchase of Land behind The Green Man, Toppesfield – Councillor Bull to report. This was discussed under agenda item 15/120.
- 15/126.1 Buying extra land adjacent to Stambourne Road down to boundary at bottom of field – Councillor Preston. This was discussed and it was agreed not to pursue at this time.

### **15/127. Planning:**

- 15/127.1 Councillor Dyson suggested that a planning policy for the Parish Council is established – suggestions were made and it was agreed to review this at the next meeting. This could be an interim policy subject to a Neighbourhood Plan being produced.

### **15/128. Playing Fields:**

Discussion and proposal to permanently remove goal posts from the Toppesfield Playing Fields and potential relocation of one to Gainsford End Playing Field.

It was agreed by those present to leave this decision with the LARG to feedback the views of parishioners. Councillor Thompson sent in a report for the LARG group which was read out at this point of the meeting.

### **15/129. Transport / Highways Issues:**

- 15/129.1 Installing footpaths to The Causeway – Councillor Preston.

This project has been looked into previously and has not been successful. The ownership of the land along The Causeway was discussed. Kaaren Berry to provide details of ownership that are known from Greenfield and Essex County Council.

15/129.2 Dog bin post needs replacing near Berwick Hall

This was discussed and Kaaren Berry to contact Braintree District Council regarding this.

**15/130. Village Hall Update report:**

Councillor Preston and Councillor James have looked at the hall to see how and if the hall could be extended. Councillor Dyson reported that there would be grants available for this project. Councillor Dyson to look into grants and speak to the village hall committee re extending the village hall. Kaaren Berry to look in the Parish Council office for any previous plans on extending the hall.

**15/131. WWI Commemoration Project:**

No further update available at present.

**15/132. Winter Gritting Team:**

15/132.1 Organise snow clearing to pathways to the shop, church etc. Plus snow shovels.

15/132.2 Proposal to purchase snow shovels for general use.

This item was discussed and Councillor Preston and Councillor Bowen to progress.

**15/133. Self-contained premises for Little Chestnuts Pre-School:**

Councillor Chinery reported that by September 2016 pre-school providers need to be able to offer 30 hours a week for children to attend and at present Little Chestnuts are unable to do this as the hall is hired out to other groups in the village for some of the week. Therefore if they had a self-contained area they could provide the 30 hours a week. Options were discussed and Councillor Dyson and Councillor Chinery are to look into this further.

**15/134. Parish Surgery:**

The next parish surgery will be held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2015 from 10.30am – 12.30pm in the village hall. The Councillor in attendance will be Councillor Dyson.

**15/135. Dates and Times of future Parish Council Meetings:**

Discuss and approve the dates and times of Parish Council Meeting for the rest of the year. This was discussed and to was agreed to remain meeting on the second Thursday on the month at 8pm.

**15/136. Any Other Business:**

*To discuss any other business / items for the next agenda*

It was questioned whether the tree along The Causeway had been replaced. Kaaren Berry to look back over previous minutes to see what was agreed.

**15/137. Date of the next meeting:**

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015 at 8pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

**15/138. Close**

The meeting was closed at 10.35pm

**Action Summary:**

**Councillor Dyson to look further into the Public Works Loan Board guidance and procedures.**

**Councillor Bull to seek a quote for repainting the Village Gates.**

**Councillor Preston to seek further quotes for the removal of the existing noticeboard at Camoise Close and the installation of the new noticeboard in its place.**

**Kaaren Berry to supply national pay scale information for salary review.**

**Kaaren Berry to provide ownership of land along The Causeway between Greenfields and Essex County Council.**

**Kaaren Berry to contact Braintree district Council regarding the Dog Waste Bin post near Berwick Hall Drive.**

**Councillor Dyson to look into grants and speak to the village hall committee re extending the village hall.**

**Kaaren Berry to look in the Parish Council office for any previous plans on extending the hall.**

**Councillor Preston and Councillor Bowen to progress the winter Gritting team and look into cost of purchasing snow shovels.**

**Councillor Chinery and Councillor Dyson to look into options for a self-contained area for Little Chestnuts Pre School.**

**Kaaren Berry to look over previous minutes to see what was agreed about the replacement tree along The Causeway.**

## Appendix A

Accounts –4th June 2015		£	£	
National Savings Deposit Account:				
Balance as at 1st January 2015		2559.74		
Community Account				
statement	Balance as at 31st May 2015		<u>£30,971.73</u>	
Subtotal:		£2,559.74		
All previous issued cheques cashed balance should be			<u>£29,988.42</u>	
Income Received (included in above figure)				
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice			Chq No:	Unrecoverable VAT
28.05.15	Stuart Hammond - Strimming & Grass Cutting of St Margarets Churchyard		101589	£150.00      £0.00
28.05.15	Positive Products Ltd - Internal audit of accounts, agreed VAT reclaim & Complete Annual return		101590	£180.00      £0.00
	Toppesfield PCC		101591	£500.00      £0.00
	Toppesfield & Gainsford End Allotment Society		101592	£500.00      £0.00
31.05.15	K. Berry - May wages		101588	£223.20      £0.00
				<u>£1,553.20</u>
19.05.15	Bank Charges will be deducted on 5th June 2015			£5.00      £0.00
Balance		<u>£2,559.74</u>		<u>£28,430.22</u>
Last bank statement received up to 29th May 2015				