

Toppesfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting Held on Thursday 6th September 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

Shaun Sheldrake

John Levick

David Bagnall

Clare Condie

Also in attendance:

Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

3 Members of the public

Lloyd Felton – County Broadband

12/21 Apologies were received from

Councillor Alan Collard.

12/22 Declaration of Members Interest on Agenda items

No declarations of interest were made.

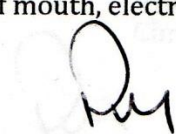
12/23 Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council

A parishioner reported that near the culvert by Berwick Farm a footpath sign has been knocked down and the rails look as though they have been hit. It was also mentioned that there was another footpath sign down at the rear of Oliver's Farm. Kaaren Berry to contact Essex County Council and Ann Read regarding the footpath signs.

A parishioner asked if the play area equipment in the recreational areas would remain as it is at present. The chairman reported that the swing chains and seats in Gainsford End would be replaced as they are wearing out and a contractor will be asked to tidy up the area and replace/repair fencing as required. The Vice-Chair reported that Toppesfield recreational area would remain as it is for the time being whilst landscaping for the area is looked at and then the youth would be invited for their ideas as to what they would like to see in this area. Both areas have had a ROSPA report carried out on them and the changes have been made in line with their findings.

Malcolm Braithwaite reported that he will be holding a meeting on the 24th September to explore the possibility of setting up a Toppesfield Stringed Instrument Appreciation Society. This is being advertised around the parish.

A parishioner mentioned that communication is an issue in the parish. It was suggested that a briefer monthly newsletter/sheet was issued to every household or sent by email rather than Facebook or the parish website as events are not always publicised on time in the Newsletter. The chairman responded by saying that an incredible amount of work goes into the newsletter and there is constant chasing for promised articles. The Vice-Chair added that it was a good idea but at present there is not much coming in however all forms of communication need to be looked at in relation to advertising events/relaying news as different forms are more effective for some and for different people, i.e. word of mouth, electronic and paper.



Lloyd Felton from County Broadband explained that his company offers a community led high speed broadband solution for Toppesfield and Gainsford End. This is a wireless technology and can offer a telephony option if required by individuals. This will be a parish project and the parish would receive some revenue dependant on take up of the project. Small form equipment is used and County Broadband has been approved by the Chelmsford Diocese, an application to the church will need to be made for a receiver to be placed on the flagpole – this could take 3 months. Historical buildings consent is not required as long as the PCC agree. Line of sight is required to receive the service and there will be 4 or 5 distribution points around the parish, so no drop in service if you are further away from the main distribution point. Parish Council approval is required and subsequently a village meeting, information flyers and door to door survey will follow. A database would then be compiled and plotting points for receivers would be identified. Costs would be a £99 installation fee and then up to £35 per month for a service of up to 32 mega bit. Three business partners within the parish will pay for the infrastructure to be put in. Discussions followed and questions asked about the service included – what is County Broadband’s troubleshooting track record like? Lloyd responded by saying that they are a local company and their support is not yet open 7 days a week but this is being looked into. They are also a broadband based support and not a computer support service and if engineers are called out to properties a fee would be charged along with an hourly rate after the first 30 minutes. Leaflets were handed to the parish council and those present. Peter Moore thanked Lloyd for attending the meeting and explained that the councillors will discuss this further later in the meeting.

12/24 Village Plan Reports

Report from Ann Read – Footpaths: I have attended a course on Enforcement and PROW legislation. It was really good and I am beginning to get things sorted out in my head and see a way forward. Adam Jenkins is no longer our P3 officer and at the moment there does not seem to be a replacement. It would appear that as in other Government areas there is a fair bit of redundancy and people having to apply for their own jobs. However, Simon Taylor, the county enforcement officer, who took the course yesterday offered to visit Toppesfield and to help sort out some of the problems. His visit will take place in early October. I will let you know when that visit is taking place.

Leisure and Recreational report – see 12/35.

No other group reports were available. Groups will be invited to each parish council meeting to report on progress.

12/25 Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the meetings held on 11th August 2012 were approved and signed by the chair as being an accurate record of the meeting.

12/26 Matters Arising from the Minutes:

No matters arising were raised.

12/27 Actions from Previous Meeting:

- 12.27.1 Peter Moore to contact village plan group members inviting them to Parish Council meetings on a rolling basis to report progress. Contact has been made with most group leaders and asked to report back on a regular basis at parish council meetings.
- 12.27.2 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. The structural work has been completed however it needs to be painted with oil and stained, the holes in the ground filled with tarmac. The concrete bases and angle irons will be black. Discussions followed as to whether there should be bollards around the pump house – agreement was not at this stage. However people do park over the hydrant cover – Peter to look at this and report back.
Christmas lights still need to be claimed for – Shaun to find quotes for replacement lights.



- 12.27.3 Andrew Bull to meet with BDC tree warden re leaning tree near the school gates – see 12/35.
- 12.27.4 David Bagnall, Alan Collard and Kaaren Berry to produce action plan for Quality Status – see 12/32.
- 12.27.5 Andrew Bull to report back from LARG re hedge/tree works and open space plan – see 12/35.
- 12.27.6 Kaaren Berry to purchase a second fixing set for the memorial bench – fixings purchased and request made for installing.
- 12.27.7 David Bagnall to prepare response to BDC re Council Tax Benefit proposals – response prepared and emailed to Braintree District Council.
- 12.27.8 Alan Collard to give a budget update at the next meeting expenditure v's Plan – report made and emailed to all councillors prior to the meeting. Summing up close on budget at present but newsletter income/expenditure needs to be addressed as this will impact as the year goes on. Peter asked if Alan could prepare Actuals v's Budget forecast to year end.
- 12.27.9 Kaaren Berry to pass forms to Alan Collard to change signatories with Barclays – forms completed but the Chairman and Vice-Chair need to sign them – now signed.

12/28 Transport / Highways Issues

Peter reported that the contractor and Highways came to the village yesterday and the scheme has been agreed and a signage placement map issued. The signs should be in place within the next three weeks.

12/29 Village Pump

Nothing further other than that in 12/27.2.

12/30 Beacon Update

See 12/35.

12/31 Village Hall Update Report

The patio area is nearly complete and quotes for the rendering of the outside wall are being sorted. Leaflets for the garage sale on the 29th September have been delivered.

A councillor has had a report of concern regarding the patio area – if there is heavy rain the pre-school area could be liable to flooding. This will be reported back to the village hall committee.

12/32 Quality Council and Competence Status

Report issued to all councillors prior to the meeting. Not many of the requirements are already being met. David proposed that individual reports are brought back to the parish council with costing's and involvements on each area. David, Alan and Kaaren to continue to progress.

12/33 Code of Conduct

The code of conduct, recommended by Braintree District Council, was signed by all councillors and the new registers of interests were issued for Councillors completion. There were some questions on completing the forms - Kaaren Berry to enquire with the monitoring officer if any training available for the completion of the forms.

12/34 Broadband

Discussions were held following on from County Broadband's talk earlier – these included the costing's, how it works and the contract. The parish council have looked evaluated a number of Broadband options and had a number of conversation with suppliers. They have concluded that the best service offering for the Parish is County Broadband and they will be supporting this service moving forward. All present were happy for Peter to progress this and sign the agreement.




Kaaren to contact Foxearth Parish Council to ask for their comments on County Broadband continuing service.

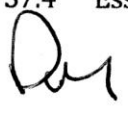
12/35 Recreational Areas:

- 12/35.1 Progression on tree/hedge quotes and works – Councillor Bull to report back following discussions with L.A.R.G. Andrew reported that the Holm Oak (the leaning tree by the school gate and the church wall) is not subject to a tree protection order and the chair of the school governors is happy to support the parish council's decision. Braintree District Council are also supportive of the removal. Costs would be £150 to remove the tree and £100 to grind the stump. Andrew to write to Braintree District Council to confirm the Parish Council's actions. The area would then need to be made good.
- 12/35.2 Improvements to public open spaces – report by Councillor Bull following discussions with L.A.R.G. Andrew reported back that the long term plan for Toppesfield recreational area is to remove the gate leading up to the Playing field and replace with bollards, also to re-tarmac the entrance road. There are no immediate plans to change the play equipment but a working party will be arranged to tidy up the area around the play equipment. A path around the edge of the playing field will be made to encourage all year use. The path will run between the avenue of trees and the hedge with a bridge at the end for vehicle use to the allotments. There has been not decision about the latrine yet. Braintree District Council are only cutting the main grass area – smaller equipment is required to cut under the trees. Kaaren Berry to contact Braintree District Council re this. The Pavilion is still under debate but it looks like the opinions are leaning towards keeping it but it would need to be made ascetically pleasing. Hedge trimming by the avenue of trees and the churchyard will be carried out. Funding will need to be sort for the larger projects. Shaun Sheldrake will write to UK Power regarding the power lines and kite flying. The beacon is too high at present and would require planning permission – the beacon will be reduced to 5 metres high so planning permission would not be required. It has been suggested that a circular bench be placed around the beacon and planting bulbs around this area.
- 12/35.3 Gainsford End Swings – Peter reported that there are several options ranging from £2500 to £6000 for the replacement /updating of the swings in Gainsford End. The ROSPA report highlighted that the chain links are wearing and need replacing so it was agreed in principal to progress the replacement of 2 swings and chains which would cost £550 +VAT. A quote has also been requested to tidying up and fencing of the recreational area in Gainsford End.

12/36 Financial Accounts:

- 12/36.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval – Payments were approved (see appendix A).
- 12/36.2 Quotations for printing the Newsletter – Councillor Bull to report back on his recommendations regarding new quotes for printing the newsletter. Andrew has been in negotiations with Paul Clark and he has agreed to price match the other quotes and a two year contract was signed. However prices may vary due to paper cost increases. *reviewed → on need*  4/10/2012
- 12/36.3 Currys – laptop warranty – decision required as to whether to renew it. It was agreed not to extend the warranty.

12/37 Correspondence:

- 12/37.1 Brochure from Kompan – play area equipment, has been received and passed to Andrew.
- 12/37.2 Audit Commission – confirmed the appointment of Littlejohn LLP as external auditors
- 12/37.3 County Update – including EALC AGM invitation and training courses
- 12/37.4 Essex County Council – notice of public consultation of Town and country Planning
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- Regulations – posters displayed and comments direct to Essex County Council
- 12/37.5 Mh-p web analytics report – it was requested for if reports available for other months – Kaaren to follow up.
- 12/37.6 Society of Local Council Clerks – membership invitation – it was agreed that Kaaren should follow this up.

12/38 Village Show:

Side show games and volunteers – Andrew will speak to Ann regarding stalls and Shaun will be available to man a stall.

12/39 Any Other Business:

To discuss any other business / items for the next agenda

Items for the next agenda, OAP lunch; gritting team and plans; The Causeway footpath; A central group calendar for events and the precept.

Andrew reported that there is a lot of talk about Neighbourhood Plans being produced – Alan to report his findings from previous training session.

St. Margaret's school have requested help to keep the recreational area clear on the 28th September as they are expecting a visit from the Essex Air Ambulance. Posters will be going up to say the playing fields will be closed that afternoon.

Essex life will be running an article in their October issue about community shops and will include Toppesfield Stores.

12/40 Date and Time of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council meeting on the 4th October 2012 at 8.00pm, at Toppesfield Village Hall.

12/41 Close:

The meeting was closed at 10.45pm.



Chairman

4th October 2012

Date

Action Summary:

Kaaren Berry to contact Essex County Council regarding fallen footpath signs.

Shaun Sheldrake to quotes for replacement Christmas lights for the pump house.

Peter Moore to look at hydrant cover near pump house with regard to vehicles not parking on it.

Alan Collard to prepare Actuals v's Budget forecast to year end.

David Bagnall, Alan Collard and Kaaren Berry to progress Quality Status reports with costing's and involvements.

Kaaren Berry to contact the monitoring officer regarding the completion of the register of interest forms.

Kaaren Berry to contact Foxearth PC regarding County Broadband's continuing service.

Andrew Bull to write to Braintree District Council to confirm action for the Holm Oak.

Kaaren Berry to contact Braintree District Council re grass cutting area.

Shaun Sheldrake to write to UK Power regarding power lines and kite flying.

Kaaren Berry to request analytic reports regarding the parish council website.

Kaaren Berry to follow up SLCC membership invitation.

Alan Collard to report on Neighbourhood Plans.

Kaaren Berry to prepare and display posters re closure of the playing field for the 28th September 2012.

Appendix A

Accounts – 6th September 2012

National Savings Deposit Account:	£	£
Balance as at 5 March 2012	2508.27	
Community Account Statement Balance as at 31 August 2012		10169.87
Subtotal:	<u>2508.27</u>	<u>11864.28</u>

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

	Total	9835.74
Income Received		0.00
Payments to be approved:		
Chq No:		
101398	S. Amerio – Doctors car service	7.60
101399	Braintree Association of Local Councils	18.00
101397	K. Berry August's wages	198.47
		<u>224.07</u>
Bank Charges will be deducted on 4 th September 2012		5.00
Balance	<u>2508.27</u>	<u>9611.67</u>

Last bank statement received up to 31st August 2012.