



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 6th December 2012 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 8.00pm

12/91. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Peter Moore – Chairman
Shaun Sheldrake
Clare Thompson
Alan Collard

Also in attendance:

Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council
1 Member of the public

Apologies were received from

Councillor John Levick
Councillor Andrew Bull
Councillor David Bagnall

12/92. Declaration of Members Interest on Agenda items

No declarations of interest were made.

12/93. Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council

No questions or issues were raised/put forward from the members of the public.

12/94. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the meetings held on 1st November 2012 were approved and signed by the chair as being an accurate record of the meeting.

12/95. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

No matters arising were raised.

12/96. Actions from Previous Meeting:

- 12/96.1 Peter Moore to contact Essex County Council regarding the hedges opposite Mallows Lane and arrange a meeting with representatives of Gainsford End regarding the speed limit. Peter has looked at the hedge in questions and will speak to the landowner. The speed limit for Gainsford End –Peter is to followed up this with Essex County Council.
- 12/96.2 Peter Moore to speak to Will Kettley regarding the mud on the Toppesfield Road – Peter to speak to Mr Kettley as to what precautions can be made to avoid this happening again.
- 12/96.3 Peter Moore to meet with Village Plan group leader regarding how to progress the areas Identified – no progress as yet.
- 12/96.4 Andrew Bull to prepare a programme management spread sheet for the next parish council meeting regarding the progress of the village plan- no information available.
- 12/96.5 Peter Moore to contact Sarah Burder at Braintree District Council regarding section 106

- Funds – Peter is has been informed there is monies available. Kaaren to contact Sarah Burder to find out how long the parish council have to claim this money and how to claim it.
- 12/96.6 Kaaren Berry to forward a PDF copy of the complaints procedure for the website – this has been forwarded on.
- 12/96.7 Andrew Bull to list for and against's and costings for a senior citizens lunch and to speak to Dave Dyson re a joint venture with the village hall committee – information not available however the decision was made not to pursue this, this year.
- 12/96.8 Andrew Bull to report back re community group meeting / activities list for newsletter – no information available – hold over to next meeting.
- 12/96.9 Kaaren Berry to contact EALC regarding courses and costs – Chairman's course totals £201, the 2 hour short course for all councillors is available next year – Kaaren to find out dates for March next year.
- 12/96.10 Kaaren Berry to provide a full breakdown of the maintenance costs – breakdown given, most of which were regarding the works to the playing fields.
- 12/96.11 Andrew Bull to supply costs for the Christmas Lunch for this year and next – information not available and decision was made not to continue with this for this year.
- 12/96.12 Andrew Bull to supply costs of grass cutting following his meeting with Braintree District Council – hold over to next meeting.
- 12/96.13 Kaaren Berry to check adverts in the parish magazine against invoices and to speak to Essex County Council regarding grass cutting payment – looking at the last issue only 5 adverts were placed and Andrew has raised invoices for these. The grass cutting payment from Essex County Council has been chased up.
- 12/96.14 Peter Moore to obtain an advertising figure from Andrew Bull and to verify maintenance Figures – to be discussed under the budget agenda point.
- 12/96.15 David Bagnall and Kaaren Berry to work on a proposed budget for next month's meeting – David has produced some figures but to be discussed under the budget point on the agenda.
- 12/96.16 Kaaren Berry to contact Braintree District Council regarding how much the precept can be raised by and why some years it is higher than others – a lengthy reply was received but to summarize the parish can set whatever precept but need to justify it. A copy of the response is available if required.
- 12/96.17 Peter Moore to circulate Jonathan Birchall's report on broadband - Peter to circulate this.
- 12/96.18 Kaaren Berry to design a poster and put in the notice boards with all councillors contact Information – email address's confirmed and will be placed in notice boards.
- 12/96.19 Peter Moore to speak to Andrew Bull regarding the senior citizen's lunch – this has now been cancelled.
- 12/96.20 Shaun Sheldrake to organise the Christmas tree lighting event as well as a flyer to advertise -
The event went very well and Peter expressed his thanks for the organising and hard work on the night.
- 12/96.21 Peter Moore to enquire about the donation of the Christmas tree – the tree was once again donated. Thank you to Mr and Mrs Clark for the kindly donating the Christmas tree.
- 12/96.22 Kaaren Berry to chase the insurance company regarding the damages Christmas lights and to ask the school if they would attend the event to lead/sing carols. The insurance company has been chased on several occasions but with no response – Kaaren to follow up. An invitation was given to the school but no-one attended the event. Discussions followed on how to engage the school. Clare to bring ideas to the next parish council meeting on how to engage the school with the village.

Discussions followed regarding Councillors actions and it was agreed that actions must be completed and reports/results forwarded to the clerk prior to the next meeting if Councillors are unable to attend the meeting.

12/97. Financial Accounts

12/97.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The payments listed were approved and signed.

12/97.2 Barclays Bank – business credit card application form received – it was agreed not to apply for this.

12/98. Budget / Precept:

Due to changes in the Council Tax Benefit scheme and the effect this may have on parish councils, further guidance/rulings are due out later in December, it was agreed to defer the budget/precept setting until January's meeting. Kaaren to prepare a draft budget for next meeting.

12/99. Standing Orders / Financial Regulations:

These were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. All Councillors to read before the next meeting to discuss any comments or changes.

Kaaren to contact other parishes regarding their internal auditor practices.

12/100. Transport / Highways Issues

A parishioner has reported an unruly hedge in Church Lane to the parish council – this has been passed onto Essex County Council.

12/101. Village Hall Update report

The new kitchen units have been delivered and are at present on the stage in the hall. This will be installed over the Christmas / New Year holidays. Kaaren and some of the village hall committee met with Sue Sheppard from the RCCE to discuss how the hall is running and any possible funding for future projects. Evidence for a need to extend the hall would be required before any funding is applied for.

12/102. Broadband

County broadband have their service in 4 locations and it will be approximately 2 to 4 months to get the village connected. Discussions with the Church are still to be held regarding using the church tower for a receiver.

12/103. Community Amenity Asset Register

Kaaren Berry to report on meeting with Jo Beavis – no further progress as no meeting has been scheduled.

12/104. Quality Council Status

Councillor Bagnall circulated the latest report prior to the meeting. See appendix B.

12/105. Christmas tree Lighting and Celebrations

The event went well and was well attended. Ideas for next year came in the form of something to follow the lighting up e.g. a band and a best lit house competition.

12/106. Events and Communication Update / Feedback

Councillor Bull and Councillor Levick to report – no report available – carry over to next meeting.

12/107. Recreational Areas / Open spaces

12/107.1 Progression on works – Councillor Bull to report. No report available.

It was suggested that the boundaries of the playing field need addressing as well as the entrance to the playing field and could the monies from Section 106 be used for this. Andrew Bull to confirm the position of works regarding this area.

12/108. Planning

Application No: 12/01504/FUL Location: 1 Church Lane, Toppesfield

All Councillors to look at the application and let Kaaren know by 10th December – no objections/comments had been received prior to the meeting.

12/109. Winter Gritting Team

Posters asking for volunteers have been put up but only 3 people have signed up. Councillors Sheldrake, Moore and Collard are willing to help. Another parishioner was also volunteered. Kaaren to speak to one of the volunteers to see if they will head the team.

12/110. Correspondence

12/110.1 Essex County Council – Bus Passenger News – no changes to Toppesfield service

12/110.2 Essex County Council Highways – Road Closure – Gainsford End Road and Harrow Hill
Posters have been put into notice boards.

12/110.3 Clerk and Councils Direct – November issue received.

12/110.4 National Grid – delayed works restarting and expected to finish March 2013.

12/110.5 National Grid – Community Forum Dates received.

12/110.6 Braintree District Council – Parish Support Grant / Precept.

12/110.7 TDR Surface Repairs brochure – Councillor Sheldrake retained this brochure.

12/110.8 National Grid – minutes of last community forum meeting and action schedule.

12/110.9 RCCE Oyster magazine – Autumn Issue received – Councillor Condie retained the magazine.

12/110.10 Glasdon trade brochure received.

12/110.11 SLCC – The Clerk Magazine – November issue received.

12/110.12 Countryside Voice – winter 2012 issue received.

12/110.13 Local Council Administration book - received

12/111. Any Other Business

To discuss any other business / items for the next agenda

Late items of correspondence: an email regarding the mobile library in Gainsford end and the possible cancellation of the service. Kaaren to contact Essex County Council regarding publicising the service. Braintree District Council have sent a revised waste collection calendar for the Christmas/New Year period.

The newsletter and the lateness of November / December issue was raised. Peter explained that it is a voluntary task and as Councillor Bull is working fulltime he does not have the amount of time he previously dedicated to it. However this does need to be looked at and Peter will speak to Councillor Bull regarding the Newsletter to discuss how help could be given.

12/112. Date of the next meeting

It was agreed to move the next Parish Council meeting, this will now be held on the 10th January 2013 at 8pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

12/113. Close

The meeting was closed at 9.40pm

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

Action Summary:

Andrew Bull to prepare a programme management spread sheet for the next parish council meeting regarding the progress of the village plan.

Kaaren Berry to contact Sarah Burder to find out how long the parish council have to claim the monies under section 106 and how to claim it.

Andrew Bull to report back re community group meeting / activities list for newsletter.

Kaaren Berry to contact EALC re dates for the 2 Hour Short Course for March next year.

Andrew Bull to supply costs of grass cutting following his meeting with Braintree District Council.

Peter Moore to circulate Jonathan Birchall's report on broadband.

Clare Thompson to bring ideas to the next parish council meeting on how to engage the school with the village.

Kaaren Berry to prepare a draft budget for next meeting.

Kaaren to contact other parishes regarding their internal auditor practices.

Councillor Bull and Councillor Levick to report on the events and Communication meeting.

Councillor Bull to confirm the position of works around the playing field and the leaning Holm Oak tree.

Kaaren Berry to ask one of the winter gritting volunteers if they would head the team.

Peter Moore to speak to Andrew Bull regarding the Newsletter.

Appendix A

Accounts – 6th December 2012

National Savings Deposit Account:	£	£
Balance as at 5 March 2012	2508.27	
Community Account Statement Balance as at 30 November		14,224.02
	-----	-----
Subtotal:	2508.27	14224.02

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

	Total	14224.02
Income Received		
Advertising receipts totalling (Included in the total figure above)		45.00

Payments to be approved:

Chq No:

101419	Toppesfield Parochial Church Council	350.00
101420	The Society of Local Council Clerks	75.00
101418	K. Berry November's wages	198.47

		623.47

Bank Charges will be deducted on 5th December 2012 10.00

	-----	-----
Balance	2508.27	13,590.55

Last bank statement received up to 30th November 2012.

Appendix B

REPORT TO TOPPESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

For discussion Thursday 6th December

TITLE; QUALITY COUNCIL IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Subject to any revisions to the current arrangements which could be announced next year, the Parish Councils approval to the Requirement dealt with below, will complete the review of our present procedures and the changes considered necessary to obtain Quality Council status.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

Test 6. Accountability

This test is to ensure that a Quality Council maintains accurate and transparent financial arrangements. An important part relates to the accuracy, and confirmation that the Councils accounts comply with statutory requirements and appropriate proper practices. This aspect has been achieved in previous years, there being no record of external auditors qualifying the Councils financial statements.

Necessary improvements.

a) The accounts must be approved within three months of the accounting date (31st March), and published within six months of that date. Electors rights must be facilitated with regard to inspection. Methods of publication have been dealt with in previous reports to this Council.

b) Systems of internal control should be in place, and an important element of this requirement would be the employment of an appropriately qualified and experienced internal auditor to maintain a continuing review of the Councils accounting and financial control systems. The order of annual cost would be £.....
Standing orders, and financial regulations to govern the Councils activities would be required. It is intended to seek the Councils approval to such documents early next year.

c) A risk assessment should be carried out to identify areas of weakness and to either remedy or arrange appropriate cover where necessary to safeguard the Councils interests

d) Responsibilities in relation to trust funds where the Council is the sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts, must be properly discharged.