

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 2nd February 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

Clare Condie

Shaun Sheldrake

Also in attendance:

Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

4 Members of the public

Apologies were received from:

John Levick, Fran Laskowski and Malcolm Braithwaite

2. Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council:

A parishioner queried what the cause of the ice near the corner of The Causeway and The Great Yeldham Road. Andrew Bull feels that this is due to water coming off the fields or a blocked drain. Kaaren Berry to contact Highways regarding the problem.

Another parishioner was concerned about the increasing size of the mound of cow dung near to a public footpath behind the new cattle shed at Mr Kettley's farm. Peter responded by saying that as long as the footpath is clear it is not an issue for the parish council but he will speak to Mr Kettley regarding this.

A representative of the 'Playing Field Committee' asked several questions of the parish council regarding the recreational areas and how the parish council are going to fund/support the projects. Peter explained that at the Toppesfield recreational area the current swings have been there prior to 1974 and the Tarzan trail has been there for approx. 23 years and the parish council are committed to making safe the equipment that is there and are mindful of not crossing over with the Village Plan so further modernisation has not been finalised. The representative questioned the maintenance of the boundaries of the playing field and who carries out the work– Peter stated that the parish council will commit to maintaining the area by strimming etc, but cannot say at this point how much it would cost and that it needs to be budgeted for. Discussions followed regarding the project costs, funding and maintenance of equipment – it was pointed out that at this stage of the village plan the parish council felt that the next step is to find out what equipment is required by the villagers prior to the plan being brought before the parish council with final figures. The question of litter picking was also raised and who empties the litter bin at the entrance to the play area – Kaaren Berry to contact Braintree District Council re the litter bin emptying.

Another member of the one of the village plan groups questioned the progress of the 30mph through Toppesfield and the question of signage and the sighting of them. Peter explained that the speed limit issue is in progress and there would be a consultation regarding this. Peter Moore to contact Highways re progress of consultation.

Paul Thompson thanked Clare Condie for securing funding for 105 hedging trees for the allotments from the woodlands Trust.

Peter Moore questioned the buildings at the allotments but Paul Thompson explained that they are not permanent and as sheds they do not need planning permission.

Andrew Colley reported that Quicksilver will be performing on the 24th March 2012 at the village hall; tickets are available from Andrew Colley. Grant Baynam is a former That's Life presenter. They will require paying in cash following the performance - £550. Andrew is looking for people to accommodate them – 1 single and a double or twin room is required. Peter will speak to Mr Blackie re this. Discussions followed re the profits / shortfall of these events and where the monies go, at present the profits go to the village hall but the parish council underwrite the losses. Peter Moore to write to the village hall committee re moving this forward to create an entertainment fund but a raffle could still be held and the profits from that to go to the village hall. Shaun will organise the bar as in previous years.

3. Village Plan:

Progress Report to T&GE Parish Council on the Village Plan --The Next Steps.

On a cold winter's night at the end of January(30th) and, yes, even the first snow of the year, 40 plus members of our village left the cosy warmth of their homes to receive an equally warm welcome at the Village Hall. The meeting was called to review and share progress to date since the start of the Village Plan process and to move on into the next phase.

Malcolm Braithwaite welcomed everyone and gave a summary of the significant progress made. Since the return of the questionnaire, a committed group of villagers have worked on the findings. They presented a set of 10 priority actions for discussion, approval or removal! Members of the group gave brief but passionate reviews of the needs, possibilities and proposed actions. They stressed the need for other villagers to join in these new action groups. Questions were posed by the attendees and lively discussions followed. Certainly the enthusiasm of the group came across and the interest and support of the villagers at the meeting was evident.

Proposed priority actions for inclusion in the Village Plan.

1. Playing Fields and Playground Equipment – Rob Stafford – Baker outlined the project and appealed for villagers to join him, providing input into the design, particularly from the young users. There is a particular need to have a group member able to access funding for this project.
2. Speed Limits – Paul Thompson had prepared an introduction. A lively discussion ensued regarding enforcement and signage. Significant progress has been made by the Parish Council in this area already, but a team to identify where signs will be placed, and then to help with enforcement, needs to be assembled. A potential review of a 20 mph speed limit in Church Lane, or the installation of speed bumps, needs to be assessed.
3. Broadband - Jonathan Burchall described this as “a complex issue”. A range of potential solutions was put forward. Data now need to be collected, estimates of costs determined, benefits detailed, and villagers responses then sought when they received the information. Businesses operating in the area need to be approached regarding funds for a business-enabling system. A team to build this programme needs to be assembled.
4. Aggregated Procurement/ Energy Savings – Great interest in saving money – but advice and guidance needed on how. Information might be provided through an Energy group or by local business(es), particularly noting the grants available (e.g. Green Deal in 2012). Energy generation might also be considered.
5. Local Food - Trisha Roberts – encouraging the production and buying of food grown locally has many benefits. The Community shop already has a local food policy and could extend its activities to sell local produce.
6. Business Directory- Graham Berry has registered a domain name, www.toppesfield.local.co.uk, and could build a community website where businesses can register their activities. Modest costs would be charged for entries. Trading may be possible through the website.

7. More / Clubs Activities- Mary- Ann Stevenson – relating to use of Village Hall, but thought not likely to be a main project for the VP.

8. Footpaths- Ann Reed – enthusiastic presentation on what is needed to improve and maintain our footpath network and provide guide maps. A focussed group need to liaise with BDC in the "Parish Paths Partnership".

9. Transport - Richard Evers – car dependent society could consider number of solutions to provide better transport options. Information on what is already available (e.g. Braintree Community Transport scheme) and formation of Car Club(s) might be useful.

10. Young Persons Council - Alan Collard – Young people had participated in the VP process and expressed views, sometimes quite strongly. A possible vehicle for their continuing involvement could be via formation of a Young Persons Council to be recognised by the PC and to work together.

With the exception of No. 7, those present approved the inclusion of the proposed projects into the Village Plan. There was some discussion on how to communicate information across the Parish, and better Broadband might help. However, it seemed apparent that the VP might include some proposals for improving communication.

Villagers were invited to take part in a photographic competition to provide photos for the final Village Plan document. The theme for these photos would be to help to illustrate "what makes Toppesfield and Gainsford End such a special place to live."

4. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the meetings held on 5th January 2012 were approved and signed by the chair as being an accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

No matters arising were raised

6. Actions from Previous Meeting:

- Peter Moore to chase up Highways regarding Mallows Lane – work was carried out on the 26th January 2012.
- Peter Moore to raise the question of 'good practice' regarding the barb wire with Janet Hill – Peter spoke with Janet Hill who explained that if the barb wire is a metre rule, if the barb wire is a 1.2 metres from the public path way there is nothing the parish council can do.
- Peter Moore to arrange for maintenance areas to be identified within the parish and the salting of identified areas – Alan and Peter will walk the village to identify areas and a quote will be prepared following that. A date is yet to be arranged. It was suggested that a poster be placed in the pub and shop asking for volunteers for a 'winter gritting team' – Kaaren to prepare poster.
- Clare Condie to speak to Paul Thompson regarding 'No Fly Tipping' signs for the allotments – Clare has spoken with Paul and the opinion was that a sign that said "No fly Tipping by order of the Parish Council" would be sufficient. Andrew Bull to speak to Paul Clark re-sign and Paul Thompson regarding the positioning of the sign.
- Kaaren Berry to speak to Andrew re follow up of P. Chinery's report of areas cut. Andrew has spoken to Mr Chinery and he will pass the document directly to Kaaren.
- Kaaren Berry to follow up the bursary scheme for the Clerks Qualification – no news yet but next course should start April or May 2012.
- Kaaren Berry and Alan Collard to identify bench and confirm engraving – identified but see section 10 for details.
- Alan Collard to speak to an identified parishioner regarding the P3 scheme – Alan has spoken to Ann Read about this. This is also part of the village plan and a group has been formed through this, Ann is happy to liaise with Adam Jenkins re the P3 scheme but

someone else from the group maybe the appointed person. It was also suggested that this group is linked fairly closely with the parish council.

- Kaaren Berry to draft letter to St Margaret's School – letter drafted and sent re recent success of the school.

7. Planning Applications:

Consultation No: 12/00019/TPOCON – St. Margaret's School - Tree works.

No objections – Kaaren to write letter of support to BDC re the proposed tree works.

8. Transport / Highways issues:

Peter Moore to write to Chief Executive at Essex County Council re 30mph limit.

The footpath request for The Causeway has made it onto the Local Highways Panel agenda on the 2nd February 2012.

9. Recreational Areas:

Andrew reported that the grant body has a 30 day agreement to give an answer for our application. They have requested more time as more information was needed but an answer should be received soon. They will response direct to Kaaren. Peter requested that as soon as an answer is received that this is progressed.

10. Financial Accounts:

- The clerks report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval was received and approved, (Appendix A).
- Proposal to approve the purchase of a memorial bench for Dick Ruggles – A suitable bench has been identified at a cost of £459.98 inclusive of the engraving but fixings would cost approximately £60 should we require them. Donations received towards the bench are around £150. It was agreed that when Alan has agreed the engraving with Dolly Ruggles the bench would be ordered and placed in the playing fields in early spring.
- Financial reporting of actual spend vs. budget – the format Alan has produced was agreed and the budget will be formalised at the next meeting. Alan and Kaaren to progress.
- Grant application from St. Margaret's School re tree works. Discussions followed the application from the school – it was agreed to approve the £700 application subject to sight of the final invoice and Peter Moore to speak to Braintree District Council to see if funding from other sources was available.
- Precept figures from Braintree district Council – figures received back from Braintree District Council were confirmed as correct.

11. Correspondence:

- RoSPA– changing ways of supplying reports – would we like to receive a online copy or a hard copy. It was agreed to receive future copies online and forward once received. Also forward to the Recreational Area Committee of the Village Plan.
- Glasdon products – Street furniture brochure received.
- Essex County Council – Bus passenger News – no changes to the buses from Toppesfield.
- Clerk and Council Direct, January 2012 edition has been received.
- Braintree District Council – Activity Days for Summer 2012. Kaaren to write to BDC re activity days for Toppesfield.
- EALC – county update has been received as well as upcoming training days. Alan and Peter are confirmed on the Planning Day on the 29th February. Kaaren to write to Ridgewell, Stambourne and Birdbrook re cost sharing on the new style short courses.

- BDC – Site Allocations Development Plan Document – minutes of the meeting held on 7th on 7th December 2011 are now on line:
<http://www.braintree.gov.uk/Braintree/councildemocracy/committees/Local+Development+Framework+Panel/7th+December+2011.htm>
- Braintree District Core Strategy – full reference copy received and available for viewing.
- National Grid – Environmental Baseline information for Route Corridor 2 – booklet available for viewing – Kaaren to place notice on boards to say available in shop for viewing.

12. Any Other Business:

- Parish Council – Goals and Ways of Working - due to time agreed to hold presentation over to next meeting.
- Village Diamond Jubilee Celebrations update and request for sponsorship – the working party has met twice so far. Events are planned for the 4th June 2012; this will be a family fun day starting at 2.30pm with the bells being rung. To be held on the playing fields, 3pm – 5pm traditional games and a traditional English cream tea at 5pm. A barn dance in the evening and a BBQ run by the allotment committee (chargeable) and Tony will run a bar. Reptile Dysfunction have been asked to play.
A price of £1500 has been received for a marquee including lighting; staging and dance floor would seat 200 people. Andrew provided a breakdown of cost for the event totalling approx. £2730 (including marquee). The consensus was that it is a great idea, it was suggested that the parish council match fund the event. Councillors were split on this but it was agreed to match fund the event up to £1500.
- Welcome Pack update – Alan has had 2 business interested so far in their names going into the welcome pack and he produced a mock-up of what the pack would look like. A note is going into the newsletter to see if anyone else wishes to go into the welcome pack.
- Philip Rawlison from Great Yeldham Parish Council has asked to join our Community Issues group – no objections from Toppesfield councillors but Kaaren to write to the other councils in the group for the views.

13. Date and Time of the next meeting:

The next parish council meeting will be held on Thursday 1st March 2012 at 8.00pm, at the Village Hall

14. Close:

The meeting was closed at 10.50pm.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

Action Summary:

Kaaren Berry to contact Highways re the iced puddle just before the corner of Great Yeldham Road and The Causeway.

Peter Moore to speak to Mr Kettle regarding the increasing mound of cow dung.

Kaaren Berry to contact Braintree District Council re litter bin emptying.

Peter Moore to contact Essex County Council re 30mph progression and consultation.

Peter Moore to speak to Mr Blackie re accommodation for the Quicksilver performers.

Peter Moore to write to the Village Hall Committee re the setting up of an entertainment fund.

Kaaren Berry to prepare poster for 'winter gritting team' volunteers.

Andrew Bull to speak to Paul Clark re producing the sign and Paul Thompson re position of sign.

Kaaren Berry to write to BDC to support tree works for St Margaret's School.

Peter Moore to speak to BDC re other sources of funding for tree works.

Alan Collard and Kaaren Berry to progress the budget formulation.

Kaaren Berry to write to BDC re activity days.

Kaaren Berry to write to Ridgewell, Stambourne and Birdbrook re courses and cost sharing.

Kaaren Berry to do notices for boards for National Grid information.

Appendix A

Accounts – 2 February 2012

National Savings Deposit Account:	£	£
Balance as at 15 November 2011	2503.26	
Community Account Statement Balance as at 30 December 2011		19417.37
	-----	-----
Subtotal:	2503.26	19417.37

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

Total 16329.74

Payments to be approved:

Chq No:

1335	Toppesfield Parochial Church Council	320.00
1336	The Toppesfield Community Shop Association Ltd	60.00
1337	K. Berry January wages	198.47

		578.47

Balance	----- 2503.26 =====	----- 15751.27 =====
---------	---------------------------	----------------------------

Last bank statement received up to 30th December 2011.