



# Toppesfield Parish Council



## Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 8.00pm

### 13/23. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

#### The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Peter Moore – Chairman  
Councillor Andrew Bull  
Councillor John Levick  
Councillor Shaun Sheldrake  
Councillor David Bagnall  
Councillor Clare Thompson

#### Also in attendance:

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

#### Apologies were received from

Councillor Alan Collard

### 13/24. Declaration of Members Interest on Agenda items:

Councillor Moore declared an interest in a late item of correspondence from Braintree District Council regarding a planning application on his personal property.

### 13/25. Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council:

Paul Thompson from the LARG group questioned the proposed tarmacking of the access road to the playing field and the effect on the church wall. He suggested whether it would be better to lay a metre wide strip of tarmac and 'hogging' or gravel either side. Councillor Sheldrake reported that two quotes are still to come in regarding the works and it was agreed that the parish council will liaise with LARG before works are approved. Paul Thompson also reported that the changing rooms have been looked at with James Blackie and they should have proposed renovation plans to bring to the next parish council meeting. The Holm Oak tree will come down on the 19<sup>th</sup> February and it was questioned whether the school should contribute towards the cost of its removal – Councillor Moore confirmed that this was a parish council matter and the school would not be asked for monies towards this.

Councillor Moore asked how the bridge was progressing for vehicle access to the allotments – Paul Thompson reported that more hard core is required and works would not continue until the access to the playing field was sorted out. The allotment society will be having a do in July – details available soon.

A parishioner asked about the size of the traffic through Gainsford End and whether we could stop articulated Lorries coming through. Also is there a weight restriction on the Cust Hall bridge as there are no signs and it appears the brickwork under the bridge is collapsing. Councillor Moore will speak to Highways about the bridge but reported that we cannot stop lorries travelling through Gainsford End.

Ray Papworth asked about the role of the internal auditor for the Parish Council and how far it should go. Councillor Moore stated that the role would be to look at the good practices and accounting processes of the Parish Council. It would be only for the Parish Council and not for other groups such

as the village hall committee, Charities and other groups. Following further discussions Ray confirmed he was happy to take on the role and will liaise with Kaaren Berry about this.

### **13/26. Minutes of the last meeting:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013 were approved and signed by the chair as being an accurate record of the meeting.

### **13/27. Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

No matters arising were raised.

### **13/28. Actions from Previous Meeting:**

- 13/28.1 Councillor Bull to prepare a programme management spread sheet for the village plan – this is not fully completed but will be circulated shortly.
- 13/28.2 Kaaren Berry to circulate course modules to all Councillors – course modules were circulated and choices to Kaaren Berry by the 15<sup>th</sup> February.
- 13/28.3 Councillor Moore to find out who cuts the Gainsford End playing field – The Mortlock's cut this once or twice a year but a working party is needed to help with the hedges etc. Councillor Bull to contact Braintree District Council to ask them to quote for cutting the Gainsford End playing field.
- 13/28.4 Councillor Moore to ask Councillor Thompson to liaise with the school regarding the Packed Lunch Plot – the school were keen to take part but due to the absence of the Head the decision to take part was not made.
- 13/28.5 Councillor Bagnall to ask a parishioner regarding being an internal auditor for the Parish Council – Ray Papworth has agreed to take on this role.
- 13/28.6 Councillor Bull to put together a proposal regarding the newsletter for the next Parish Council meeting – see 13/33.
- 13/28.7 Kaaren Berry to reply to a Gainsford End parishioner who questioned the speed limit in Gainsford End – reply was sent concerning the speed limit.
- 13/28.8 Kaaren Berry to raise invoices for adverts in the December issue of the parish newsletter – invoices sent and waiting payment.
- 13/28.9 Kaaren Berry to contact Barclays re savings accounts and interest rates available – interest rates not high, the Active Saver gives 0.38% and the Base Rate Reward gives – 0.5% interest. It was agreed to move the National Savings monies into the Base Rate Reward account – Kaaren Berry to look into this.
- 13/28.10 Councillor Levick to review the website price plan at renewal – this will be looked at when the renewal comes up. Councillor Bagnall reported that Essex County Council can create websites at no cost – Councillor Levick to look into this.
- 13/28.11 Kaaren Berry to draft pro forma for budget figures v's expenses – not progressed at present.
- 13/28.12 Kaaren Berry to ask a parishioner about heading the winter gritting team – Julius Stafford-Baker agreed to take on the role and has carried out several gritting sessions, but must engage others to help.
- 13/28.13 Kaaren Berry to enrol Councillor Bagnall on the EALC course – How to Raise the profile of your Parish Council. – Enrolled and Councillor Bagnall attended the course today – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

### **13/29. Financial Accounts**

- 13/29.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The Payments listed were approved and signed.

It was requested that a budget v's actual / cash flow be available for the next meeting. Also Kaaren Berry to look into the overdue account, received at the meeting, for the grass cutting from Braintree District Council.

### **13/30. Transport / Highways Issues:**

Councillor Moore expressed his thanks to Councillor Collard and the parishioners for their letter to Essex County Council and for the petition which was sent off with 95 signatures on it. Unfortunately the service is a commercial one and Essex County Council are looking at alternatives. Councillor Bull has sent up a Facebook page and a link to Halstead Gazette's Facebook page for comments.

The footpath along The Causeway has been on the programme of works for some time – Councillor Moore has spoken to Essex County Council regarding this and the project will be resurrected. There have been a number of complaints about cars parking on the grass along The Causeway.

### **13/31. Village Hall Update report:**

Councillor Sheldrake had nothing to report but the village hall committee meet again on the 12 February so an update would be available for the next parish council meeting. Councillor Sheldrake to enquire on progress following the meeting with Sue Sheppard regarding funding for the hall.

### **13/32. Quality Status:**

A report was circulated as to where the Parish Council is at present with this – however evidence needs to be gathered to support the areas covered. Councillor Bagnall reported that there is no further information available at the moment regarding the new scheme.

### **13/33. Newsletter:**

Councillor Bull presented the January/February edition at the Parish Council meeting. This was a 12 page edition, with a change to its layout and less photographs - the cost for this is £270. A more traditional calendar has been suggested for the back page and if all advertising space was sold it would be cost neutral. It was agreed to continue with the new format but if a larger issues were needed a couple of times a year to report events that the page count should not be restricted.

### **13/34. Recreational Areas / Open spaces:**

Councillor Moore has instructed Playquip to install the new swings at Gainsford End and they are due to be installed soon.

Councillor Bull asked on behalf of the LARG group if the tarmacking of the access road to the playing field could go further into the field rather than stopping at the edge – this will be considered following quotations received.

### **13/35. Community Issues Group:**

The draft terms of reference were agreed and the suggested dates for the next meeting circulated. Kaaren Berry to liaise with the other clerks re dates of the next meeting and the terms of reference.

### **13/36. Winter Gritting Team:**

More volunteers are needed to help with this and a request for the Parish Council to supply equipment was made. Kaaren Berry to enquire about shovels for gritting / snow shifting.

### **13/37. Correspondence:**

- 13/37.1 Essex County Council – Bus Passenger News Jan/Feb – Withdrawal of the No.10 service with effect from 17<sup>th</sup> February 2013
- 13/37.2 EALC County Update January 2013 and details of training courses received.
- 13/37.3 Glasdon – Trade leaflets received re bins and seating. Councillor Moore has approached National Grid for a new grit bin in Harrow Hill as its existing one has been hit but no response has been received yet. Kaaren Berry to ask Essex County Council if we can get sponsors for grit bins, can we increase the number of them in the parish and would they then fill them.

- 13/37.4 Essex County Council – Funding for Youth Projects – Councillor Bull has retained this information.
- 13/37.5 Braintree District Council – Site Allocation and Development Management Plan. Documents now available on CD – Councillor Moore retained to look at.
- 13/37.6 Anglian water VAT questionnaire – received due to mix up at Anglian Water which resulted in them not billing the Parish Council since June 2012. Billing will start again this year as it was their error.
- 13/37.7 Zurich Municipal – form for renewal quote. Agreed to obtain a quote from them. Kaaren Berry to check the Standing Orders regarding tenders for insurance.
- 13/37.8 Essex County Council – Minerals Local Plan public consultations – posters displayed.
- 13/37.9 Clerk and Councils Direct January Issue received.
- 13/37.10 SLCC – Clerk Magazine January Issue received.

Late correspondence:

Information from Essex Police has been received regarding unauthorized encampments and what action should be taken.

Mh-p website analysis report for January received.

Braintree District Council – an application for prior notification of agricultural development – Erection of steel framed building at Bradfields, Harrow Hill. This was for information only and due to the type of application the Parish Council comments are not required. Full information is available on their website.

**13/38. Any Other Business:**

To discuss any other business / items for the next agenda

Councillor Sheldrake confirmed the next surgery will be on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February, Councillor Bull was asked to place this on Facebook and posters are in the notice boards.

Councillor Bagnall reported that this course was useful and he will circulate summary of points of interest to all Councillors.

The felt on the First Aid shed has come off and needs repairing – Councillor Moore to seek quotes for the repair and asked if an article could be placed in the newsletter regarding the equipment available.

Kaaren Berry asked the permission on the Parish Council if information / paperwork for Toppesfield Community Pub Ltd be stored in the Parish Council Office – this was agreed by those present.

Councillor Moore thanked all the Councillor’s for their hard work last year and for their continuing support.

**13/39. Date of the next meeting:**

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at 8pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

**13/40. Close**

The meeting was closed at 10.00pm

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Chairman

.....  
Date

## **Action Summary:**

**Councillor Moore to contact Highways re weight restriction signs at Cust Hall and the state of the brickwork.**

**All Councillors to let Kaaren Berry know their course modules by 15<sup>th</sup> February 2013.**

**Councillor Bull to contact Braintree District Council re quote for cutting the Gainsford End playing field.**

**Kaaren Berry to look at moving the National Savings Account into a Base Rate Reward account.**

**Councillor Levick to look into Essex County Council's website hosting/creating.**

**Kaaren Berry to do budget v's actuals and a cash flow and follow up on the overdue account to Braintree District Council.**

**Councillor Sheldrake to enquire on progress following the meeting with Sue Sheppard regarding funding for the village hall.**

**Kaaren Berry to liaise with the other clerks re dates of the Community Issues group meeting and the terms of reference.**

**Kaaren Berry to enquire about shovels for gritting / snow shifting.**

**Kaaren Berry to ask Essex County Council if we can get sponsors for grit bins, increase the number of bins and would they fill them.**

**Kaaren Berry to check the Standing Orders regarding tenders for insurance.**

**Councillor Moore to gain quotes to repair the First Aid shed roof.**

Accounts – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013

National Savings Deposit Account:	£	£
Balance as at 5 March 2012	2508.27	
Community Account Statement Balance as at 31 January		15,221.09
Subtotal:	----- 2508.27	----- 15,221.09

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

	Total	15,221.09
Income Received D Mason – donation (Included in the above figure)		1000.00

Payments to be approved:

Chq No:

101430	EALC – Allotment Day Training	65.00
101429	K. Berry January's wages	198.47
		----- 263.47

Bank Charges will be deducted on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013

5.00

Balance	----- 2508.27 =====	----- 14952.62 =====
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Last bank statement received up to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013.