

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 7th July 2011 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 – Vice Chairman
Fran Laskowski
Clare Condie

Also in attendance:

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

Apologies were received from:

Alan Collard
John Levick

2. Open Session for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council, including Village Plan update:

Anne Read asked about the thickening hedge outside 'Doghouse' and what the situation was regarding this as it is obscuring signs. Peter reported that he has spoken to Braintree District Council regarding this – case number 1838919. Braintree DC are trying to establish the boundaries on the Causeway. The boundary of the County Council and private property needs to be established before further action can be taken. John Simpson, Highway Liaison Officer for the County Council is dealing with this.

Anne Read also raised concerns about the ends of the new road to Mr Clarke's farm as it does not follow the footpaths. Anne stated that the ends of the road need to be kept clear for access to the footpaths or perhaps gates need to be installed. Peter will speak to Mr Clarke to ask what his plans/provisions are for footpath access at either end of the road when the works are complete.

Paul Thompson reported that he has received a quotation from Anglian Water for a standpipe in the verge which would connect onto a pipe from the allotments if it is less than 3metres would be £598 plus VAT. Paul would donate the pipe to the allotments. The charge for water would be minimal. Fran and Paul are looking to set up an allotment committee and following this being set up there may be funding available through the Allotment Association. Peter stated that the parish council are happy to back this if funding can be found through either fund raising, the allotment association or section 106 to set it up and the water bill to be paid for by allotment holders and no charge back to the parish council. Fran to arrange date to set up the first meeting for the allotment committee.

Paul Thompson also asked what the latest is on speed limits through the village. Peter reported that Olive Porter – Essex County Council – has stated there is funding available and a speed review throughout Essex is happening at the moment and we are on that review list. The cost would approximately be five and a half thousand pound. As more information is available this will be reported back.

Paul Thompson stated whilst he was away he noticed a new lottery funded recreational area and the only safety matting down was a rubber criss-cross mat where the grass grows through it. Paul asked if this would possibly be a cheaper option. Andrew stated that

Wicksteed have drawn up a 'cad' diagram of suggestions for the play area and will be presenting this at the next parish council meeting. They also seek the funding for the project but we need to canvass users. The time scale if the project is approved and funding available could be 5 weeks. Both play areas in Toppesfield and Gainsford End would cost probably be in the region of £50, 000 and the equipment needs to be accessible for all users. Peter is still waiting for 'Elvin' from Braintree District Council to come back to him.

Steve Amerio brought in an Oyster magazine produced by the RCCE which featured an article of Royal Wedding Celebrations – Toppesfield and Gainsford Ends celebrations were included in the article. Kaaren to contact RCCE for a copy of the magazine.

Ray Papworth thanked Alan for the accounts for the year 08/09 and asked about the accounts for 2009/2010. Andrew believes he knows where these are and will locate them. Ray presented a spread sheet for the years 2006 - 2009 of income and expenses and a comparison sheet of the precept charged and where we lie in the district overall. Peter thanked Ray for this and stated this would be a great help in preparing the budget.

Peter reported that the Twinstead to Bramford overhead power cabling across Essex will effect our villages. This will effect us as new power lines will be coming in and there is a proposed small power station to be erected just south of Great Yeldham. As further information becomes available Peter stated he will keep everyone informed but at the moment it would appear that there is little impact to the parish. Further information about this can be looked up on the national grid website.

Malcolm updated everyone about the village plan. 240 questionnaires went out at the beginning of June and should all be collected by 19th July 2011. Some areas already have an 80% collection rate. Ray Papworth is going to co-ordinate the collection of returned questionnaires and arrange delivery to the company for analysis. Communication of what the village plan is about still seems to be an issue as does the question of who's paying for this to be done. The RCCE will be forwarding a payment of £2000 shortly towards the costs of the village plan. When the analysis is complete and the projects identified funding is out there to support many projects and this will be looked into at the appropriate time. The launch of the village plan is still on track or June 2012. Malcolm mentioned that there have been rumblings of Jubilee Celebrations for next year but nothing formalize yet and asked if the village plan could be launched at the same time – merging community projects and national events. Peter felt that this would have to be done carefully but was unsure if they could be brought together. Anne also stated that next year will be the 10th Anniversary of the shop.

Anne Read pointed out that the website needs updating as the meeting dates are incorrect. Peter agreed and suggested that perhaps alternative ways and/or support for updating need to be looked at. It was also mentioned that perhaps the website provider needs to be reviewed.

3. Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the meetings held on 9th June 2011 were approved and signed by the chairman as being an accurate record of the meetings.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

- Recreational Equipment – the safety aspect is the priority concern at present. For a short term fix new floor tiles could be laid at a cost of £2000 to £2500 but there could be issues with personal liability of laying the matting if a local company is used. It may be that the swing area has to be closed off. Peter will take advice from Elvin to see what he says. A decision must be made by 20th July as to whether the area needs to be closed off or not.

- Broadband Update – Peter is liaising with Martyn Fall, Chairman of Stambourne PC, regarding this and they are trying to combine forces on this. Clare mentioned that Foxearth have recently updated their broadband. This was under the community broadband project. Kaaren to find out contact at Foxearth regarding this.

5. Actions from Previous Meeting:

Alan has emailed accounts to Ray Papworth but John still needs to publish these on the website.

Updating of website still needs to be carried out – John to progress this.

Peter has contacted Stambourne PC regarding broadband – ongoing.

Kaaren has set up an action log and will maintain it.

Flagpole – this will bring back a bit of colour to the village following the removal of the flags etc. after the royal wedding celebrations. The position of the flagpole to be looked at following the meeting today.

Peter rang IPC re overhead works – not finalised as ongoing.

Kaaren spoke to and provided a report from Margaret regarding the Doctors car service – it was agreed that Peter will purchase (on behalf of the parish council) a mobile phone and that cost of up to £25 per month would be covered but this will be reviewed after three months.

Kaaren has contacted Stambourne and Ridgewell Clerks re closer working – Stambourne would be interested in this but no response from Ridgewell as yet. Kaaren to write again with suggesting annual meeting for projects and clerks sharing of information.

Andrew has three other templates for agendas and will look at the formats.

6. Planning Issues:

Planning applications were received from 7 Park Lane, Toppesfield and 2 Berkely Cottages, Stambourne Road, Toppesfield. No objections were received for either application.

Peter has a projector which could be used for presenting planning applications at the parish council meetings for group consideration.

7. Transport / Highways issues:

- Speed limit update – this was discussed earlier in the meeting.

8. Financial Accounts:

- The clerks report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval was received and approved, (Appendix A).
- Bank details – Peter will contact the bank regarding the changes required to address and signatories.
- Insurance renewal – this has been renewed but next year will need to be looked into for possible alternative insurer. Kaaren questioned whether our insurance certificate needs to be displayed. Kaaren to enquire whether it needs to be on display.

The cost of the verge cutting was discussed and Andrew stated that this is an informal agreement and it is understood that all verges in the parish boundaries are within the agreement. This will need to be formalised and a map of verges which are included and how many cuts a year are involved. Andrew will speak to Paul Chinery regarding this.

Clare questioned the amount of interest we receive on the National Saving account and whether it was possible to receive a higher interest rate elsewhere. Clare will look into this.

9. Date and Time of the next meeting:

The next parish council meeting will be held on Thursday 11th August 2011 at 8.00pm, at the Village Hall

10. Any Other Business:

- Book tokens for St. Margaret's School – historically two book tokens of £5 each are presented to two children leaving the school. This means someone has to choose who receives them. Stambourne PC also present book tokens but they only go to Stambourne children. The school have asked that either there are enough for all leavers or not to issue them as it can cause problems. It was agreed to provide all leavers with a £5.00 book token.
- RCCE – It was queried whether we need three separate subscriptions to the RCCE (the parish council, vantage and the village hall are all members in their own right). Kaaren to contact the RCCE and find out.
- Peter expressed his appreciation for Ray's help in providing the account sheets and he would like to formalise Ray's help and for him to have a more formal role within the parish council.
- Andrew has received a letter regarding the village show and if the parish council would like a stall the cost would be £5.00 per stall. Andrew will contact Braintree DC and Essex County Council regarding environmental information / give-aways.
- Following discussions regarding a joint event for the Jubilee Celebrations, the Shop and the Village Plan launch it was felt that these would probably be better as separate events.

Correspondence and decisions as follows:

Braintree District Council Parish Vulnerable Persons List – Kaaren to contact BDC to find out who constitutes as a vulnerable person and how to go about drawing up a list.

Jubilee Oaks Scheme by BDC – yes the parish would like to take part.

Crime Prevention Panel meetings in Halstead – no attendance from the Parish Council.

Braintree District Council Emergency Plan Booklets – Kaaren has a copy in the Parish Council Office if anyone would like to take a look at it.

RCCE Annual Review 2010/2011 – a copy is available in the parish council office if anyone wishes to read it.

Wethersfield Fire Station are having an open day on 3ed September from 12pm – 3pm if anyone wishes to go along.

EALC – county update is available if anyone wishes to view it.

Mobile library – revised timetable will be put up in the shop.

Letter from Vitalise seeking a donation was received – agreement was not to make a donation from the parish council.

Essex Works Passenger Transport – News reports available for viewing in the Parish council office.

11. Close:

The meeting was closed at 10.05pm.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

Action Summary:

Fran Laskowski to set up meeting for allotment committee.

Kaaren Berry to contact RCCE re Oyster magazine.

Kaaren Berry to contact Foxearth PC re Community Broadband Project.

Peter Moore to speak to Elvin re recreational area.

John Levick to update the website.

All councillors – position of flagpole.

Peter Moore to purchase mobile phone for Doctors Car Service.

Kaaren Berry to write to Ridgewell and Stambourne Clerks.

Andrew Bull to revisit the agenda format.

Peter Moore to contact Barclays regarding the change of address and signatures.

Kaaren Berry to enquire about the display of insurance certificate.

Andrew to speak to Paul Chinery re verge cutting.

Clare Condie to look into higher interest rate accounts.

Kaaren Berry to contact RCCE regarding membership.

Andrew Bull to contact BDC / ECC re environmental information / give-aways for the village show.

Kaaren Berry to contact BDC re vulnerable persons list.

Appendix A

Accounts - 07 July 2011

National Savings Deposit Account:	£	£
Balance as at 12 July 2010	2498.26	
Community Account Balance as at 28 April 2011		11808.33

Subtotal:		11808.33
If all previously issued cheques cashed balance should be		
Total		9339.36
Credits:		
Cash back from Royal Wedding Celebrations – banked 21.06.11		100.00
Cheque from Braintree D.C. – Street Cleaning – banked 07.07.11		970.87
Payments to be approved:		
Paul Chinery – verge cutting		480.00
Braintree District Council – Election Fees		55.20
AON – insurance		596.64
Mike Henson – VP minutes		18.00
RCCE		40.00
K. Berry – wages up to 06.04.11 & expenses to date		233.43
	-----	-----
Balance	2498.26	8986.96
	=====	=====

No bank statements have been received since 28th April 2011.