

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10th March 2011 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 8pm

1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Andrew Bull - Vice Chairman
John Levick
Fran Laskowski
Steve Amerio

Also in attendance:

Dave Dyson
Kaaren Berry - Clerk to the Parish Council
3 Members of the public

Apologies were received from:

Peter Moore
Shaun Sheldrake
Fraser Croft

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

- Sheila Braithwaite provided a written quotation for 2 signs for St. Margaret's Primary School which also suggested where they should be placed. Sheila stated that the signs would only take a couple of weeks to be obtained.
- Paul Thompson asked where we were at with the 30mph speed limit. Andrew reported there was no further progress at present as Peter is awaiting information back from ECC.
- Paul has arranged the first schematic walk. A booklet will be drawn up with further walks and also be placed in the newsletter. It was pointed out that the shop have been selling copies of O/S maps - this may be breaching copyright laws.
- Paul asked about the possibility of a water source at the allotments. He has made some tentative enquires regarding a artesian well which would cost around £2000. Paul asked if there was any funding available for this or possibly the need to fund raise. He also offered to help with the distribution pipework to help keep costs down.
- Malcolm Braithwaite asked who carried out the massacre of the hedgerows in Gainsford End and the subsequent mess it left. It was reported that this would have been carried out by a local farmer as it surrounded his property.
- Malcolm also enquired who carries out the verge cutting. It was stated that this is carried out by Paul Chinery approximately 4 times a year and he is then paid by the parish council for the work.
- Malcolm asked about the parish council accounts as the last viewable ones published on the website are 2007/2008. It was agreed that the balance sheets could go onto the website. Andrew stated that the precept will be going up to increase funds.
- Malcolm enquired after any progress on broadband improvement. Andrew stated an email has been sent to Jonathan Birchall to get a quote. No response received as yet.
- Malcolm gave an update on the village plan:- At the last full meeting those present split into 4 or 5 sub groups to formulate the statements to go into the

questionnaire. Warwick Data services have been appointed to analyse the responses. Paul Clark has agreed to do the printing at an approximate cost of £70-£80. The next meeting is on the 22 March 2011 where the questionnaires will be put together and these will be issued in May, collected in in June and results should be back in August so all on tack at present. Malcolm mentioned the need for improving transport links - this is an ongoing project. It is felt that the farming community needs to be more on-board with the village plan and any contacts would be welcomed by Malcolm.

- Paul asked if there was a Toppesfield in Bloom and that the village needs tidying up and cheering up. Paul reported that Plants that Grow sell pallets of daffodil bulbs for £5.00 each and suggested a working party be formed.
- Malcolm brought the problems with Mallows Lane to the attention of the parish council. The hole in the road will be filled by Essex County Council but the whole road needs repairing. It was suggested a parish council representative calls ECC and ask to meet someone on site . Peter or Andrew will ring ECC regarding this.

3.Approval of previous minutes:

The minutes were approved and signed.

The area around the bollards has been seeded by Anne Read and many thanks to the working party for clearing and planting the area adjacent to the bottle bank.

4.Matters Arising from last minutes:

1. Speed Limit update.

No progression on this at present.

2. Publication of Annual Accounts.

It was approved that the balance sheets could be entered on the website and John Levick will put them on the website.

3. Broadband update.

Peter to tweak Jonathan Birchall regarding this. The majority of broadband reception in Toppesfield and Gainsford End is not very good and the aim is to improve this for all. Pressure needs to be put on BT or an alternative provider needs to be sought.

Steve reported that he contacted the council regarding the litter down Great Yeldham road. They now have this down to be done on their next round of the area. Steve is waiting for the area highways team to get back to him regarding the replacement of salt bins for Gainsford End and Harrow Hill.

It was also mentioned that the dog waste bin by the bottle bank to overflowing. Andrew will ring environmental health at BDC about this.

5. Planning Issues:

None received.

Cherry Tree House, The Street has been sold.

6.Transport / Highways Issues:

Taxi/car service - no further progression as waiting for the newsletter to go out and then a designated telephone number is required. It was suggested that an old mini bus could be purchased and have a list of drivers available for residents to use. It was agreed that a full debate was needed on this.

7.Preparation for forthcoming Elections:

Paperwork has been received. Those wishing to stand as councillors will need to fill out nomination papers. Dave stated that if there are more than 7 candidates then an election will need to be held.

25.03.11 - Notice of Election needs to be placed on the notice boards.

04.04.11 - Last day for nomination papers to be received at BDC.

07.04.11 - Last day for withdrawal of papers.

05.05.11 - Elections.

8. Planning of Annual Parish Meetings:

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7.30pm on 12th May 2011 at the village hall. Invitations will go out to the organisations of the village to say what they are doing followed by a buffet afterwards. This meeting will be held with the current parish councillors.

The Annual Parish Council Meeting will then be held on 19th May at 8pm. This is the first time the new parish council will meet.

9. Financial Accounts:

Andrew has not received a current statement. These are still with the previous parish clerk. Andrew and Dave will arrange to visit Steve and collect all papers etc. from him.

10. Any Other Business:

- *Signs for St. Margaret's School* - the quote provided was for £234. Councillors were concerned about the cost. Steve will investigate alternative quotes.
- *Artesian well for the allotments* - it was agreed that a couple of formal written quotations need to be obtained to support the investigation and will then be discussed at the next meeting.
- *Bulbs / working party* - it was agreed that daffodil bulbs be planted in the autumn and a working party be organised nearer the time. It was also agreed that Paul Thompson be approached to purchase £40.00 worth of bulbs from Plants That Grow but they would need to be stored somewhere until then.
- Dave reported on behalf of the village hall committee that another heater could be placed above the stage area and the heaters on the back wall will be aimed slightly higher.
- Ron Searle's bench will stay in the garden area.

11. Date of Next Meeting and Close:

The next parish council meeting will be held on Thursday 7th April at 8pm, at the Village Hall. The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

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Chairman

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Date

Action Summary:

John Levick to publish balance sheets on the website.

Peter Moore to tweak Jonathan Birchall re broadband improvement.

Andrew Bull to contact BDC regarding overfull dog waste bins.

Andrew Bull and Dave Dyson to arrange a visit to Steve Marshall.

Steve Amerio to investigate alternative quote for school signs.