

**Minutes of the 679th meeting of Toft Parish Council  
Meeting held on Monday 6 August 2012 in The People's Hall, Toft at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillors: M Yeadon (Chairman), E Dolman, R Howling, J McCarten and J Betson.

In attendance: District Councillor T Hawkins, 1 member of the public, and Mrs Gail Stoehr (Clerk).

**12/99 Apologies, and reasons for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Gouldstone and County Cllr Fiona Whelan.

**12/100 Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda**

There were no declarations of interest.

**12/101 Public Participation on Agenda items and matters of mutual interest**

A resident reported a leaning post on the Green, overhanging vegetation in the High Street, on public rights of ways and also grass is encroaching on the narrow pavement to the Church. It was thought that the Highways Supervisor had already dealt with the overhanging vegetation. Cllr McCarten reported on correspondence with the CCC Countryside Access Team regarding the overgrown footpaths was noted and a letter sent to the landowners requesting that Footpath 2 be cut back. Grass encroachment the pavement to the Church is to be reported to CCC.

Broken glass in the telephone box is broken is to be reported.

Cllr Hawkins reported on the SCDC LDF Issues and Options consultation, and the possible implications for Comberton and potential impact on Toft. Bennell Farm still has an option to submit their sites. The application for the barns was refused on the grounds that it was outside the development framework. The LDF provided an opportunity to look at the framework.

**12/102 Matters Arising**

Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation including report on workshop

Cllr Yeadon reported on the exhibition he had attended at Cambourne and the workshop at SCDC. No changes were proposed for Toft however Comberton would be a minor rural centre. Details of the LDF are to be circulated.

**12/103 Policies, procedures and risk assessment review including those required under the Code of Conduct 2012**

The table of existing policies proposed policies and the recommendations was considered. It was agreed to accept all recommendations and the policies were adopted as follows

Standing Orders	The new model (2010 version) and the suggested modifications in brackets.
Financial Regulations	The model policy.
Code of Conduct 2012	The new model as recommended by SCDC's Standards Committee.
Info Guide	Update the title Freedom of Information Policy / Info Guide and add the wording "This Parish Council will endeavour to make as much information as possible available under this scheme however, on occasion other Acts such as the Data Protection Act or the exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act have to be considered prior to information being released and sometimes it may be necessary for information to be withheld or redacted."
Complaints (including	Update the model policy with the new legislation.

procedure for handling non-pecuniary code of Conduct Complaints)	Adopt the Cottenham Parish Council's policy as the Council's procedure for handling non-pecuniary Code of Conduct complaints.
Dispensations under the Code of Conduct	While it was resolved that the Council delegated the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis is set out under section 33(2). It was also agreed that most requests would be considered by the Parish Council at its meetings. Adopted. Standing Orders to be updated to show "Declarations of interest and dispensations To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate."
Communications	No change
Internal Control and Risk Assessment Policy	Keep the strategy and also adopt the Internal Controls and Risk Assessment Policy.
Equal opportunities	New policy. The Council reviewed its functions where this may be relevant.
Health and Safety	New Policy.
Child Protection	New Policy
Data Protection	New Policy
Management of Records	Clerk's policy.

Standing Orders included clauses regarding a Minutes Secretary attending the meetings, and the procedure for dealing with planning applications between meetings.

It was agreed to carry out a check on contractors risk assessment arrangements, public liability cover and child protection arrangements.

Paper copies of all adopted policies are to be given to all members to retain.

#### **12/104 Planning**

- a S/1369/12/FL – Old Horse Yard, 62 Comberton Road – Change of use and alterations

It was agreed to recommend approval as the application was considered to be an enhancement to that part of the village, and did not have a negative impact on the village. The change of use from employment to residential was considered acceptable and the reduction in employment space was acceptable as there were already a number of vacant units in the village and empty space in the Old Horse Yard was not acceptable. Cllr Hawkins agreed to recommend that the application should go to Committee if the Officer is minded to refuse it.

- b S/1500/12/NM – Grain Barn, Old Farm, Church Road – Non-material amendment to plans approved under S/0356/11/F  
Noted.

- c S/1501/12/DC – Grain Barn, Old Farm, Church Road – Discharge of conditions 5,6,8 and 17 of S/0356/11/F  
Noted.

#### **12/105 Members items and reports**

- a People's Hall funding request

Consideration was given to the request for possible interim funding for the village hall improvements and refurbishing and whether the present mortgage could be extended temporarily to cover immediate costs by way of a loan for the People's Hall, pending receipt of grant funding which would only be received after work had been carried out.

The Clerk's report on the existing loan balance and repayment terms was noted. Whilst the Parish Council was supportive in principle, the proposal to refuse permission for the additional funds and / or bridging loan was carried <sup>(Prop MY, 2nd ED, carried with 3 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention)</sup> for the following reasons:

- 1) It was not possible under the Local Government Act 2003 and Article 25(2) of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 (No. 3146) for a parish council to borrow for the purpose of lending to another body.
- 2) Whilst the Council had a budget provision of £6,000 for the project the significant funding requested had not been budgeted for or considered
- 3) The Parish Council did not know how long it would take for the Parish Council to secure the requested funding or the timescales for reimbursement.
- 4) The Council's assistance over and above the £6,000 already earmarked would prejudice the Village Hall's ability to attain grant funding.

The Parish Council recognised that the project itself was not in jeopardy but the problem was due to the timescale and cashflow, and still supported the project. A letter is to be sent to Richard Fletcher informing him of the outcome.

Consideration was also given to the enquiry as to whether the Council's involvement would enable the People's Hall's Committee to legitimately claim VAT back. HMRC's guidance notes on VAT on village halls had been circulated by the Clerk. It was agreed to look at the terms of the Trust Deed and also the Lease with regards to responsibilities.

#### **12/106 Closure of meeting**

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.29 pm.

Signed .....Chairman .....date.

---