

**Minutes of the 771st meeting of Toft Parish Council
on Monday 6 July 2020 at 7.00 pm
Held remotely via Zoom due to the current pandemic**

Present: Councillors: M Yeadon (Chairman), P Ellis-Evans, K Popat, E Miles and A Tall.

In attendance: 13 members of the public; Kelly Edwards (Community Engagement Consultant, Instinctif Partners) Andy Brand (Planning Director, Abbey Group) David Mead (Architect), Andy Thompson (Planning Director, Southern Region Co-op); District Cllr Grenville Chamberlain, County Cllr Lina Nieto and Mrs A Griffiths (Minutes Secretary, LGS Services).

Open public session including reports from the County and District Councillors

Representatives from Instinctif Partners and the Abbey Group presented proposals for a new Co-op store at Bennell Farm and outlined the proposed layout, design including landscaping, trading hours, delivery arrangements and the creation of jobs. If planning permission was given the construction and deliveries during construction would be cognisant of the nearby residents and the Village College. The application would include a noise impact assessment, highways statement, and a retail impact assessment and would also cover design, access and sustainability. They did not consider there would be substantial impacts on the existing stores in Toft or Comberton. The landscaping between the road and the fence would still be maintained by the Abbey Group and the Co-op. The background to the organisation and its community involvement with funding provided for local good causes was outlined.

There was an opportunity for questions and answers.

Residents expressed concerns at the financial impact on the Toft Shop, increased traffic movements, and the impact and potential hazard for users of the cycle path.

In response to a question the Chairman explained that he was not aware of any discussions on a change to the parish boundary. He thanked the developers for attending and explained that the Council would await the plans then consider them as a Council.

A resident expressed the hope that the playground and football area would be re-opening soon. The Chairman explained that the Council hoped it would re-open on Wednesday when the recommended signage had been received.

District Cllr Chamberlain reported on:

- The re-opening of play parks.
- The Cambourne to Cambridge proposals had been withdrawn for the time being subject to further discussions.
- East-West Rail – discussions were ongoing. Cllr Chamberlain expressed the hope that a route north of the A428 might still be possible.

County Cllr Nieto reported on:

- The re-opening of libraries. Larger ones would be re-opening first. Residents were encouraged to look at the CCC Libraries website for details of free adult education courses for professional development. She undertook to circulate information about these. Cllr Nieto praised the dedicated library staff for providing an essential service.

In response to a resident's question, Cllr Nieto confirmed that responsibility for buses now lay with the Combined Authority which jointly with CCC was constantly in discussions with Stagecoach and other bus providers to ensure continuation of a good transport service, especially given the projected growth in the area. A question was asked about extra school buses to ensure social distancing. Cllr Nieto replied that this would depend on developments with Covid-19 and the numbers involved, so it would be necessary to wait and see. A resident commented that in the past it had been difficult for CCC to obtain data from Stagecoach.

1. Apologies for absence and declaration of interests

1.1 To approve written apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Wrycroft and Borrell (both out of parish).

1.2 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda
Cllr Ellis-Evans declared an interest in a planning application for 64 High Street as a neighbour.

1.3 To receive written requests for dispensations (if any) and to grant any dispensation as appropriate
None.

2. To approve the minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of 1 June be approved by the Council.
RESOLVED the minutes are to be signed by the Chairman as soon as practically possible given the current pandemic. (Prop EM, 2nd PEE, unanimous)

3. To consider any matters arising from the last or a previous meeting including

3.1 (6.1.3) 20/01992//FUL – Bennell Farm, West Street – Erection of 45 dwellings, including two self-build plots, and associated development

RESOLVED, following discussion, to object to the application with the following comments: (Prop MY, 2nd PEE, unanimous)

“Toft Parish Council considered the planning application at its meeting on 6th July 2020 and unanimously agreed to the following.

Toft Parish Council Objects to this Planning Application for the following reasons.

The scheme is not included in the approved South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and it is Toft PC’s view that considering the amount of effort it took to get an approved Local Plan it should be followed. Toft PC believe that this alone should warrant refusal.

Although in Toft the scheme is within the Comberton Village boundary. Comberton is a Minor Rural Centre. This designation permits a residential development of up to 30 houses. This scheme proposes 45 which greatly exceeds the maximum permitted development. This on top of the 90 houses previously approved but not yet incorporated into the village. Again, having agreed the Local Plan it should be complied with.

The Local Plan has been approved as it provides the housing needs of the area and therefore additional homes are not deemed necessary.

The value of the plot as pastoral or, ideally, recreational land (as originally proposed with a football pitch), should not be underestimated. Comberton is lacking pleasant green space at the west end of the village and it should be noted that this area was designated as green belt until the approval of the adjacent development. The loss of this area as green land is detrimental at a time when the value of green areas is being increasingly recognised. Furthermore this development is contrary to policy NH/8 which aims to mitigate the Impact of development adjoining the Green Belt. The application should be refused for this reason.

There is limited employment opportunity in this area, most residents will need to travel by car to employment sites.

Specific concerns about the design of the development are;

Design led approach

The developer uses the idea of a design led approach to maximise the numbers of houses that can be built on this plot of land exceeding previously proposed numbers. We do not see this as being design led, it’s more a ploy to maximise the numbers of houses, exceeding the number proposed on the site within the approved Local Plan.

Road Safety

Having 135 households exiting onto the B1064 almost opposite the entrance to the village college is bound to cause additional congestion and safety issues. Already at

school times this is a congested area with cars, school buses, cyclists and school pupils walking to school. This will be exacerbated by the fact that the road is basically a single lane in this section as cars are parked on the roadside. Primary school pupils from Toft are also expected to walk through this congestion to get to the Meridian Primary School having had the school bus withdrawn. "Highways" have commented on the design of the roadways in the development but have not commented on or addressed bigger problem regarding the capacity and safety of the road junction with the B1046. Toft PC have recently been approached by the Bennell Farm Business Park asking for a reduced speed limit on the Toft to Comberton Road due to safety concerns at their junction on to the road this junction is close to the junction to the new development and reflects the general concern about road safety in this location.

Appearance

Currently the entrance to the village has a soft transition from the harsh agricultural land to the village environment. The proposed design has three storey buildings prominently located on its south western edge, this will give a stark approach and entrance to the village, completely out of character with the general appearance the rest of the properties on the road which are a mixture of pleasant single and two storey designs and historically interesting buildings. Toft PC would like to see these three storey properties towards the rear of the development should it be approved.

The response from "Landscaping" reflects Toft PC's views. Before the area of this development became a builders compound area it was a pleasant rural meadow area with copses of trees. This type of environment is valuable and lacking in the area.

Drainage

There were concerns raised about the capacity of the infrastructure to manage the drainage from the 90 house development and this development appears to be piggybacking onto that development. The response from the Drainage Engineer for the SCDC highlights the lack of supporting data for this application. This is another reason to refuse this application.

Local Facilities

Toft PC's main concern is the doctors. It is already stretched and it's difficult to get appointments. It's premises and location make it impossible to increase it's capacity for patients or cars. The dentist is now only accepting private patients."

RESOLVED to write to James Fisher, SCDC S106 Officer, informing him of the Parish Council's requirements under the S106 should the application be approved. These would include, in addition to the list recently provided to SCDC, the improvements needed to the cycle path between Toft and the new development, and the additional capacity required at Toft People's Hall. (Prop MY, 2nd PEE, unanimous)

3.2 (3.2 of May meeting) East-West Rail – to consider correspondence from Haslingfield Parish Council and whether to join a group of affected parishes

RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon should attend the forthcoming meeting being arranged by Haslingfield Parish Council and report back to the next meeting. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

3.3 (5.2 of May meeting) To consider insurers' comments and subsequent correspondence regarding the curly slide and whether to undertake a further inspection at a cost of £100.00

RESOLVED, having considered the Insurance Company's comments, to accept the quotation for £100.00 from The Play Inspection Company to obtain an independent third party opinion on the equipment. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

4. Consideration of correspondence

4.1 SCDC – Proposal to set up Mobile Warden Scheme in the parish

RESOLVED, given that the Parish Council does not wish to lead the initiative, to take no action. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

- 4.2 NALC – New Model Code of Conduct consultation
RESOLVED, having considered the draft document, to make no response. (Prop MY, 2nd AT, unanimous)

Other

The Chairman reported that he had received a complaint from a resident about noise in the village from builders and grass cutting. The Chairman will place a note in the Calendar.

5. Finance and risk assessment

- 5.1 To consider the finance report and approve the payment of any bills

RESOLVED to receive the financial report and check the invoices and bank statements before the payments were approved, plus Clive Blower (Glass) £71.82 and Cllr Wrycroft (Glass) £35.40. (Prop MY, 2nd PEE, unanimous)

Salaries		£202.68
M Yeadon	Borehole expenses	£161.49
Canalbs	Internal Audit	£106.80
RPM	Playground repairs	£684.00
LGS Services	Admin support May	£445.39
CCC	Street light energy	£194.43

Credits, including a street light credit note of over £1000 and receipt of the precept, were noted.

- 5.2 Play inspection reports

RESOLVED, noting that metal signs showing Government guidance were awaited from SCDC, that Cllr Yeadon should in the meantime erect temporary laminated notices to enable the playground to open on Wednesday. (Prop MY, 2nd PEE, unanimous)

- 5.3 To consider any matter which is urgent because of risk or health and safety

RESOLVED to note that the Clerk had used delegated powers to accept a quote from RPM to carry out the re-setting of the rocker and picnic tables at a cost of £570 plus VAT, as this was not a task that the handyman could do for insurance reasons. Having received 2 quotes, RPM was the cheaper so this was accepted.

RESOLVED, whilst Madingley Mulch had not delivered the play bark as arranged and had failed to notify the Council or the handyman of this, to continue with the order as an alternative quotation obtained for the bark had proved prohibitive, and to await delivery of the bark before contacting the handyman. (Prop MY, 2nd PEE, unanimous)

- 5.4 To carry out a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control that has been in place during the year under review (between 1st April 2019 and 31 March 2020)

RESOLVED, having undertaken a review, that the Parish Council has no concerns about the effectiveness of the system of internal control which has been in place during the year. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

- 5.5 To consider the Internal Auditor's report

RESOLVED to note that the difficulties with individual councillors' dedicated email addresses had now been resolved and to update the website and SCDC. Cllr Miles will place an updated notice on the notice board.

Clarification was sought on the correct procedure for members making declarations of interest at Zoom meetings.

There was good evidence of Risk Assessment.

RESOLVED that in the light of the low numbers involved, a separate annual audit of the William Eversden Charity was not required. (Prop MY, 2nd AT, unanimous)

- 5.6 To prepare the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return)

RESOLVED that the statements 1-9 in Section 1 of the Annual Return should all be answered "Yes." (Prop MY, 2nd AT, unanimous)

- 5.7 To approve the Annual Governance Statement by resolution

RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Statement be approved by resolution of the Parish Council and signed by the Chairman on the Council's behalf. (Prop MY, 2nd AT, unanimous)

- 5.8 To consider the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return)
The Accounting Statements were considered.
- 5.9 To approve the Accounting Statements by resolution
RESOLVED that the Accounting Statements be approved by resolution of the Parish Council. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)
- 5.10 To ensure that the Accounting Statements are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting
RESOLVED that the Accounting Statements be signed and dated by the Chairman. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)
- 5.11 To complete the certificate of exemption – AGAR 2019/20 Part 2
RESOLVED that the AGAR 2018-9 Certificate of Exemption be signed by the Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council. (Prop MY, 2nd AT, unanimous)
- 6. To consider any Planning or Tree works applications received**
- 6.1 Planning Applications
None. Cllr Ellis-Evans had notified the Council of a planning application near her home. RESOLVED as this had not been received, that the Chairman would be willing to call a meeting if members requested. (Prop MY, 2nd AT, unanimous)
- 6.2 SCDC decisions to note
- 6.2.1 20/01487/TTCA – 2 Glebe Close
RESOLVED to note that this application was notified to the Council on 22 June and an extension was sought. However, SCDC approved the application on 23 June. Cllrs Yeadon and Ellis-Evans will raise the matter with the planners at the forthcoming meeting.
- 6.3 Tree works applications
- 6.3.1 20/1328/TTCA – 41 High Street
RESOLVED to note that this application had already been determined by SCDC. This will also be raised at the planning meeting, along with difficulties experienced by some people in zooming in on the plans online.
- 7. Members items and reports for information only unless otherwise stated**
- 7.1 Village Maintenance
Cllr Tall reported that the bus shelter and telephone kiosk had both been repaired.
- 7.2 Highways including update on LHI application
Cllr Tall reported that a resident who had complained about the poor road surface near Farmers End had been advised to report it on the CCC website.
RESOLVED to note that some potholes in Church Road and Comberton Road had been filled in but the work was of poor quality. These and a blind spot sign placed on the Council verge in High Street had been reported to CCC. A resident had also complained about the quality of the repairs in Church Road.
There had been a marked increase in traffic numbers in the last two weeks. He had sent data to District Cllr Chamberlain as there had been separate incidents of vehicles driving at over 70 mph late at night in June.
- 7.3 Toft People's Hall
Nothing to report.
- 7.4 Footpaths
RESOLVED to receive Cllr Miles's verbal report that she had purchased 5 signs at a cost of £41.70 and to approve reimbursement subject to Cllr Miles providing receipts to the Clerk. (Prop MY, 2nd PEE, unanimous)
The proposed locations for the signs were noted. Some posts may be required. RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon will assist Cllr Miles with installation.

7.5 Defibrillator report

Cllr Ellis-Evans reported that everything was in order and that the equipment had not been used.

7.6 Climate Change Working Group report

RESOLVED to receive Cllr Popat’s verbal report on the availability of grants from Zero Carbon Communities and the options for an application, and that Cllr Popat should circulate a link to members and make initial enquiries of the Chairman of the People’s Hall Committee whether there is any scope for replacing the oil heating at the People’s Hall with solar or other means of heating.

RESOLVED that Cllrs Popat and Tall should consider a grant application to go towards the improvement of the cycle path, and bring a recommendation and draft application to the next meeting.

7.7 Operation London Bridge Working Group report

Cllr Miles reported that a meeting had been held and a number of items had been identified. Cllr Miles will submit a report for the next meeting when this will be an agenda item.

7.8 Greater Cambridge Planning Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Project

RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon should look into this.

8. Closure of meeting

A welcome pack is to be delivered to a new resident.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

SignedChairmandate.
