

**Minutes of the 778th meeting of Toft Parish Council
on Monday 11 January 2021 at 7.00 pm
Held remotely via Zoom due to the current pandemic**

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

In attendance: 1 member of the public, District Cllr Grenville Chamberlain, and Mrs Gail Stoehr (Clerk).

Public participation on agenda items and matters of mutual interest (includes reports from County and District Councillors and representation by members of the public)

District Councillor Chamberlain reported on:

- A briefing on Covid. In South Cambridgeshire the rate of infections was doubling every six days. He urged everyone to follow the guidance and has urged Anthony Browne MP to press for vaccination centres to be open 24 hours a day.
- The Scrutiny meeting. Chief Constable Nick Dean had attended the meeting to explain the cut back in PCSOs, resulting in 40 redundancies. The aim is to deliver the same level of service and recruit some additional officers. Residents were asked to report if they see anything wrong; whilst it might not be acted upon immediately, it might be useful. He offered that officers could attend a Parish Council meeting if required.

1. Apologies for absence, declaration of interests and application for co-option

1.1 To approve written apologies and reasons for absence

None.

1.2 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda

None.

1.3 To receive written requests for dispensations and to grant any dispensations

None.

1.4 To consider any application for co-option received or how the vacancy may be filled

This item is to be removed from the agenda as there are no vacancies on the Council.

2. To approve the minutes of the last meeting on 7 December

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a true record. (Prop EM, 2nd PE, unanimous)

RESOLVED that the minutes are to be signed by the Chairman as soon as practically possible given the current pandemic.

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

3.1 (3.0.1) Play equipment cleaning – to consider quotation received

RESOLVED not to accept the quotation received from RH Landscapes but to place an article in The Calendar seeking volunteers or pay someone to do the work, otherwise the Chairman will carry this out in the Spring.

Other

3.0.1 SCDC – Three free trees update

RESOLVED that Cllr Ellis-Evans should send an update to SCDC and report that the free trees had suffered a great deal due to hot weather.

3.2 (4.1) SCDC – Section S106 requests for development of 12 self-build dwellings at Hardwick Road (re-submission)

RESOLVED to note the report received on the application and its refusal by SCDC, and the correspondence from James Fisher expressing the understanding that the application had been refused. The draft response by Cllr Yeadon was considered.

Highways had informed Cllr Tall that the verge near the Church was a designated verge so they would not fund or facilitate a hard standing as its condition was not bad enough. If the Parish Council wished to carry out the work it should submit an LHI application.

Consideration of the verges by the Church is to be an agenda item for the next meeting along with the suggestion received from a resident for posts on one side and parking on the other.

4. To consider correspondence received since the last meeting requiring the Council's attention

4.1 Community Football and Sports Grounds enquiry regarding potential sale of playing fields

RESOLVED to respond that there was none.

4.0.1 RESOLVED to note the report by the Chairman that Cambridge Design Partnership (CDP) had contacted him following a complaint that people were not working from home. The Chairman read GDP's statement about the Police's visit and confirmation that they were compliant, which they will be sharing with the village in the Calendar.

5. Finance, Procedure and risk assessment and use of delegated powers

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 Martin Yeadon (Calendar greeting) £15.00, Toft PCC (Calendar) £219.50, Clive Blower (Footpath signs) £219.51, and Opus (Street light electricity Direct Debits) £126.78 (Nov) and £213.95 (Dec). (Prop MY, 2nd PEE, unanimous)

Salaries		£115.88
LGS Services	Admin support (December)	£430.33

Credits, including allotment rents, were noted.

5.2 To receive play inspection reports and consider any work required

It had not been possible to carry out the checks this month due to the lockdown,

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

Cllr Miles reported that she had reported a log across a footpath to CCC.

5.4 Village Green – to consider whether to register the land formally at the Land Registry

RESOLVED to register the land with the Land Registry. (Prop MY, 2nd AT, unanimous)

The Clerk advised the Council's public liability only extended to the land and not to the events such as the maypole dancing unless it was an event arranged by the Parish Council and minuted as such.

5.5 To review the budget FY2021 and consider arrangements for any outstanding projects and earmarked reserves

RESOLVED in addition to the draft figures presented by the RFO:

- The draft budget was reviewed line by line.
- The website was an outstanding item.
- The Council would be interested in negotiating a fixed fee for email and telephone calls.
- Bus shelter cleaning was not required.
- Street lights electricity – The Clerk's complaint to Opus was noted. The incorrect invoicing had been reported and a credit as compensation promised. The RFO was checking the invoices.
- Grass cutting: RESOLVED the current contractor should be retained if the price remains the same for the 2021 season, due to the current pandemic and the level of service.
- Allotments facilitating is to be earmarked in the reserves.
- LHI – Earmark at year end the LHI scheme 2021/22.
- Trees, Sports Day, Toft 2020 and Climate response – budget to be earmarked at FYE
- The heading "Defibrillator training" was changed to "Defibrillator (includes training) –to be earmarked at FYE.
- Welcome packs any unspent budget at FYE. RESOLVED as Cllr Miles had obtained quotes for £150 to £250 for printing, and presentation envelopes £75

that Cllr Miles should submit an expenses claim for out-of-pocket expenses for printing the welcome packs.

- Special projects - The email from Haslingfield Parish Council was read by Cllr Tall. Leeds Day solicitors had been appointed by Cambridge Approaches. The cost of a judicial review would be in the region of £75,000 and they were seeking pledges from £50,000 from parish councils, Haslingfield Parish Council had agreed £13,000. They were seeking to make East West Rail consider the northern route on the same basis as the southern route.

Costs associated with East West Rail: "NO" signage boards and other signage, leaflets, and the costs of a judicial review as to why the northern route had not formed part of the consultation. Other parish councils had used S137. The Clerk advised on S137 powers and agreed to check if the Parish Council has a specific power for legal representation. Provision was made for signage £300 and leaflets £100 and adjustments were made to the S137 fund for FY2021; £1750 is to be vired from contingency into the S137 heading this year. £126 (the maximum allowed) included for FY22

The views of the residents as to this spending and signage is to be sought in The Calendar.

Computers for children – The Clerk advised that benefit to an individual was not possible but that funding to the IT Club could be made so it could purchase and loan computers.

- P3 – the Ramblers bench fund is to be used. The invoice of £219.51 from Clive Blower is to be taken from P3 reserves

5.6 To consider and approve the budget for FY2022

RESOLVED to release £2250 from the general reserves to balance the budget

RESOLVED the budget for FY2022 be approved by the Council. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

5.7 To set and demand the precept for FY2022

RESOLVED to keep the precept the same as last year, at £15,000.00. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

6. To consider any Planning or Tree works applications or related items received

6.1.1 20/05184/CTY – Comberton Village College – Proposed ground source heat pump consisting of heat pumps and buffers/storage to be accommodated within a proposed energy centre, borehole array and connecting pipework

RESOLVED that the Parish Council is unable to reach a decision as there is no information available on the SCDC Planning Portal. Whilst its stance is anticipated to be "No objection" information is to be requested and circulated and if there are any objections it will be discussed at a meeting.

6.1.2 20/01992/FUL – Bennell Farm, West Street – Erection of 41 dwellings, including two self-build plots and associated development - AMENDED

RESOLVED 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 11th Jan 2021 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 41 which 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), 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. We also note that Landscape Consultees also recommend refusal of this application.

We note that the Greater Cambridge, Natural Environment, Landscape Consultees recommend refusal as the development would be contrary to policies Policy S/2: Objectives of the Local Plan, HQ/1: Design Principles, NH/2: Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character and NH/8: Mitigating the Impact of Development In and Adjoining the Green Belt.

Road Safety

Having 131 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 the 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.

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 LLFA for CCC highlights the lack of supporting data for this application and recommends refusal. This is another reason to refuse this application.

Local Facilities

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

6.2 SCDC decisions for information

- 6.2.1 20/04051/HFUL – 27 High Street – Installation of external wall insulation to front rear and gable end walls – Permission granted.
- 6.2.2 20/03775/HFUL – 43 High Street – Dropped kerb – Permission granted.

- 6.2.3 20/03757/FUL – land adj to 6 Hardwick Road – Erection of a detached dwelling house and associated works – Permission granted
- 6.2.4 20/03521/S73 – 55 School Lane – Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) pursuant to planning permission S/4098/19/VC – Permission granted

6.3 Tree works applications

6.3.1 20/2458/TTCA – 28 High Street

RESOLVED that the Parish Council is neutral and has no comments.

6.3.2 20/2424/TTCA – Tree in farmer's field behind 15 School Lane

RESOLVED that the Parish Council is neutral and has no comments.

6.3.3 20/2359/TTCA – 6 Glebe Close

RESOLVED that the Parish Council is neutral and has no comments.

7. Members items and reports for information only unless otherwise stated

7.1 Village Maintenance

Nothing to report.

7.2 Highways

RESOLVED to receive Cllr Tall's report:

- The highways verge outside the Church will be the subject of an LHI.
- Flooding in the High Street. Remedial work last year uncovered a number of linked drains to private dwellings, gardens and ponds. An investigation is taking place from Beldams Close to the High Street. When funding is available this will be added to the priority lists. Cllr Tall has documented standing water and shared the information with CCC.
- Hedges – CCC has requested that two residents cut back hedges and has filled a couple of potholes in School Lane.
- Cllr Tall has downloaded the speed data and will provide a report for the next meeting.

7.3 Toft People's Hall

Nothing to report. There is a meeting at the end of the month.

7.4 Footpaths

RESOLVED to receive the verbal report from Cllr Miles that the signage had been erected by Clive Blower and that a large number of complaints had been received about horses on footpaths making a mess. RESOLVED that Cllr Miles should draft a letter thanking those who do comply, together with a list of recipients for the Clerk to send. Cllr Miles is to see if local tree surgeons have tree shredding available which might be used to improve the footpaths subject to the County Council agreeing.

7.5 Defibrillator report

RESOLVED that Cllr Ellis-Evans should place an article in Calendar on how to use the defibrillator.

7.6 Climate Change Working Group report

The first meeting in 2021 will cover an article for Calendar and a meeting in February will add articles for Calendar.

7.7 East West Rail outcomes from the Eversden Group meeting and further actions

Taken earlier. RESOLVED to receive the verbal report from Cllr Tall that the Eversden Group meeting was supporting Cambridge Approaches who had had a meeting with Anthony Browne MP who is supportive of the northern route and having a full and fair consideration.

It was suggested taking a look at the Eversden verge signs.

There was a petition on change.org which presently had over 5000 signatures and which anyone could sign. Toft could join with neighbouring villages to have a unified discussion with other villages or parish councils as to whether or not the consultation had been a fair consultation, and the economics of the case.

At 10.10 pm Cllr Wrycroft left the meeting and did not return.

RESOLVED to bring to the next meeting consideration of a commitment to funding and whether to work with the Eversdens for costs.

8. **Closure of meeting**

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 10:17 pm.

SignedChairmandate.

DRAFT