

**Minutes of the 819th meeting of Toft Parish Council  
Held on Monday 4 November 2024 in The People's Hall, Toft at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillors: M Yeadon (Chairman), E Darbyshire, B Harris, E Miles, S Tebbit and C Watson.

In attendance: Mrs A Griffiths (Minutes Secretary, LGS Services)

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

None.

**1. Apologies for absence and declaration of interests**

**1.1 To approve written apologies and reasons for absence**

None.

**1.2 To receive declarations of interests from councillors on items on the agenda**

None.

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

None.

**2. To approve the minutes of the last meeting on 7 October 2024**

RESOLVED that the minutes of 7 October 2024 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

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

**3.1 (3.2) Grass cutting contract – to draft and approve specification**

The previously circulated revised draft specification was reviewed and a number of changes made. Consideration was given to the number of cuts for each area and whether the number of cuts should be reduced to 8 between mid-March and mid-November.

RESOLVED to approve the specification as amended, subject to Cllr Miles discussing the number of cuts with Tricia Ellis-Evans and confirming the outcome, after which the contract should go out to tender.

**3.2 (3.3) Biodiversity policy – to consider Action Plan**

Cllr Miles spoke to the draft Biodiversity Action Plan circulated at the meeting. Areas covered by the plan included the Hedgehog Recovery Programme, Nest Boxes, Tree Planting, Bug Hotels, Butterflies and Moths, Wildlife flower planting, Bourn Brook maintenance, and Working with Local Agencies, eg farmers, Woodland Trust and Wildlife Trust. Champions are to be found to lead each area of activity, while Bourn Brook is covered by the Friends of Bourn Brook.

Cllr Miles outlined suggested actions under each section and ideas for tree planting.

A hedgehog day was suggested for May half term. Cllrs Miles and Darbyshire will visit Shepreth Hedgehog Hospital.

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Miles for preparing the Action Plan.

RESOLVED that Cllr Miles should put the plan in the Calendar, with names removed, and asking for volunteers to help develop any of the areas to contact Cllrs Miles, Darbyshire and Friends of Bourn Brook if they are interested. The plan will also be placed on the website.

**3.3 (3.6) The Methodist Chapel; future plans – update**

Cllr Yeadon reported on his discussions with the Senior Steward at Toft Chapel and correspondence with the head of East Anglian Methodist Church.

RESOLVED to note that in the event of a sale this would not take place for some two years and that it would not be feasible for the building to be rented out for community use, thus there would be no benefit in making an application for ACV designation.

RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon should keep in touch with developments.

- 3.4 (3.7) To consider new bench at The Drift  
RESOLVED given that the existing bench was firmly fixed and very low, that a new bench was required, possibly similar to the bench near the Church.  
RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon should bring a quotation to the next meeting for the Parish Council to consider whether to take this forward.
- 3.5 (4.2) 20 mph bid – update  
RESOLVED that Cllr Darbyshire should re-submit the application when the next round opens.  
RESOLVED with regard to the next LHI application, that Cllr Darbyshire should draft an application for solar powered batteries for the MVAS equipment, and that Cllr Yeadon should investigate the cost of solar panels. (Prop ED, 2nd MY, unanimous)
- 3.5.1 (4.1 of 1.7.24) Resident request for speed limit between Toft and Comberton  
RESOLVED, given that the application for a 20 mph limit throughout the village had been unsuccessful, that ED should also submit an LHI application for a reduction in the speed limit from 50 mph to 40 mph on the B1040 between Toft and Comberton, in line with other roads in the area.
- 3.6 (7.1) Report on training about community use of vacant buildings  
Cllr Miles reported on the training attended and the support available if a suitable building were to become available.
- 3.7 (7.6) Proposal for a new community notice board at the Birdlings – to consider sizes and designs  
RESOLVED that a notice board of a similar style to the Parish Council notice board at the Birdlings would be preferable, without locks for ease of access.  
RESOLVED to ask the management group for the Birdlings whether they would be willing to put up a notice board for the community, and also ask about hedgehog holes and lighting for the cycle path. Cllr Yeadon will try to find out the contact details for the management group.
- 4. To consider correspondence received since the last meeting requiring the Council's attention**
- 4.1 Ministries of Housing, Communities and Local Government – Consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings  
RESOLVED having considered the consultation questions in turn, that the Parish Council supports remote attendance at meetings in exceptional circumstances, and fully remote attendance in certain circumstances.  
RESOLVED that the Parish Council does not support proxy voting.
- 4.2 Request for agreement for road closures in Church Lane next year  
RESOLVED that the Parish Council supports the request from the Social Club for road closures for a beer festival and community day, noting that the closure would apply to School Lane and not Church Lane.
- 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. (Prop MY, 2nd ED, unanimous)
- |                    |                     |         |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------|
| Salaries           |                     | £223.92 |
| Toft People's Hall | Room hire           | £15.00  |
| LGS Services       | Admin support Oct   | £522.73 |
| CCC                | 20 mph contribution | £593.00 |
| Toft People's Hall | Room hire           | £15.00  |
- 5.2 To receive play inspection reports and consider any work required  
Cllr Watson reported that all was in order and the new equipment was popular.
- 5.3 To consider any matter which is urgent because of risk or health and safety and relates to Council property  
None.

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

### 6.1 Planning applications received – to be considered

6.1.1 24/03941/PRIOR – Cambridgeshire County Council Social Services building, Comberton Road – Conversion of former Social Services offices into 2 no. 3 bed two storey dwellings, 1 no. 3 bed single storey dwelling and 1 no. 2 bed single storey dwelling  
RESOLVED to respond with the same comments as before.

6.1.2 22/01743/CONDA – Old Farm Business Centre, Church Road – Submission of details required by condition 3 (Permeable Construction Details), 4 (Paving Details), 6 (Lighting) and 8 (Biodiversity Enhancement) of planning permission 22/01743/FUL  
22 01743 FUL-BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT 22 01743 FUL-  
PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL 2201743FUL Planning Permission  
Decision Notice  
RESOLVED that the Parish Council make no comments.

6.1.3 21/01919/CONDD – Land rear of 6 Hardwick Road – Submission of details required by conditions 4 (Lighting strategy), 13 (Landscaping), 14 (Sustainability) and 16 (Water consumption residential details) of planning permission 21/01919/FUL  
RESOLVED that the Parish Council make no comments.

6.1.4 20/02757/CONDD – Land adjacent to 6 Hardwick Road – Submission of details required by conditions 13 (Materials), 14 (Hard and soft landscaping) and 16 (Lighting) of planning permission 20/03757/FUL  
RESOLVED that the Parish Council make no comments.

### 6.2 Planning applications for which a response has been made between meetings using delegated powers – to be noted

6.2.1 24/1088/TTCA – 41 High Street – Clerk delegated no response  
Noted.

6.2.2 24/1080/TTCA – Manor Cottage, Church Road – Clerk delegated no response  
Noted.

6.2.3 24/1081/TTCA – Home Meadow, Comberton Road – Clerk delegated no response  
Noted.

6.3 SCDC planning decision notices and appeal notifications and applications for information only.  
None.

### 6.4 Tree works applications

6.4.1 24/1141/TTCA – 4 Farmer's End  
RESOLVED that the Parish Council make no comments

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

### 7.1 Village Maintenance

#### 7.1.1 To review and agree quotations for repairs to the bus shelter

Cllr Tebbit declared a pecuniary interest as one of the quotations was from a family member, and left the meeting at 9.10 pm.

Cllr Yeadon reported that the bus shelter was in a worse condition than previously thought, and quotations had been sought for replacing the panels, frame and sill, and two oak posts. Two quotations had been received, for £1523.31 plus VAT and £1,900 respectively. Another quotation was awaited.

RESOLVED that if both the other quotations are higher, to accept the quotation for £1523.31 plus VAT from James Tebbit as being the lowest quote.

Cllr Tebbit re-joined the meeting at 9.17 pm.

#### 7.1.2 To review and agree quotations for the QPJ area

RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon should bring a proposal to the next meeting, having received one quotation so far, and may look for other sources of funding.

#### 7.1.3 Repairs to the Well

RESOLVED to note that the bucket for the well, which is a Parish Council asset, had fallen off the rope, but that a resident had retrieved it and it had been repaired.

7.2 Highways

Cllr Darbyshire reported that several logged items needed to be chased, including a pothole in School Lane, and an estimated date for the renewal of the white lines and "Keep Clear" signage by the shop.

7.3 Toft People's Hall

Cllr Watson reported that a meeting was being held next week. The proposed works to the building were a long way off.

Cllr Yeadon reported that the Social Club had asked for old Parish Council minutes and information relating to the purchase of the People's Hall to display in an exhibition commemorating 60 years of the People's Hall.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council has no objections.

7.4 Footpaths

Nothing to report.

7.5 Defibrillator report

Cllr Watson reported that she had installed a new pad and had a spare.

7.6 Birdlings liaison

Nothing to report.

7.7 Livestock Owners' Obligations

Cllr Miles reported that there was no register of livestock owners to be notified if anyone came across an animal in danger or distress, and suggested writing to the MP to enquire about this issue. It was noted that livestock was not the Parish Council's responsibility but that of the owners.

RESOLVED that Cllr Miles could write to the MP as a concerned parishioner should she so wish.

7.8 Plunket UK

Taken earlier under item 3.6.

7.9 Bourn Brook

Cllr Miles reported that the Brook was in a poor condition with ivy overhanging and places where logs/trees had fallen into the Brook.

RESOLVED to write to the Environment Agency to express concerns at the condition of Bourn Brook through Toft.

## 7.0.10 Flood warnings

Cllr Miles enquired whether there was a means of receiving flood warnings in advance. It was noted that whilst residents are warned of potential flooding for their own properties but the village as a whole is not warned. It was suggested that if heavy rain was forecast, residents could check the Environment Agency's flooding web page.

## 7.0.11 East West Rail

A notice of forthcoming local consultation events during December and January had been received. The non-statutory consultation runs from 19 November to 24 January.

RESOLVED that this should be an agenda item for the next meeting.

## 7.0.12 Speed cameras

Cllr Yeadon reported that he would move the camera in School Lane shortly and shared details of the data collected. The average speed was 15 mph and the percentage travelling at over 20 mph was 10-14%. The maximum speed was around 30 mph.

RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon should write an article for the Calendar and report on the data for the High Street next month.

## 7.0.13 Bird boxes

Cllr Darbyshire reported that the bird boxes for the Church yard were ready to be installed but the People's Hall had declined to have one. It would be necessary to think of other locations, such as the tree behind the bus shelter.

7.0.14 Overgrown hedges

A request for people to cut their hedges is to be placed in the Calendar.

7.0.15 NALC salary recommendations

The Chairman reported on NALC's recommended annual salary increase for Clerks.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council should follow the recommendation from NALC. <sup>(Prop MY, 2nd ED, unanimous)</sup>

7.0.16 Christmas Greeting in the Calendar

RESOLVED that the Chairman should place the Parish Council's Christmas Greeting in the Calendar.

7.0.17 Trigger points for S106 monies and solar lighting on Comberton Road

Cllr Yeadon reported that it appeared that the S106 funding for solar lighting on Comberton Road had not been included in the S106 agreement. He had raised this with the SCDC S106 officer and a response was awaited. The hedgehog holes were thought to be an arrangement between the developers and the residents.

8. **Closure of meeting**

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

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

