Minutes of the 840th meeting of Toft Parish Council
Held on Monday 5 October 2026 in The People's Hall, Toft at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors: M Yeadon (Chairman), E Darbyshire, W Howling, P McCarthy and E Miles.

In attendance: 2 members of the public, including Jake Tebbit (People's Hall); District Cllr C Hubbard and Mr B 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)

Mr Jake Tebbit on behalf of the People's Hall reported on the improvements that were being undertaken to the interior of the Hall. They are now moving on to the building maintenance required. The large window frames are rotting and need replacing. They are currently looking at replacement wooden windows rather than installing uPVC windows or repairing the existing windows. The Parish Council will check whether it is possible to claim back VAT on maintenance costs if they are funded by the Council.

A resident reported that there had been a great deal of badger activity in the village.

A comment was made that it was difficult for drivers to see to the left when exiting School Lane onto Brookside. Cllr Darbyshire had reported some of the problems to UK Power Networks eight months ago and chased them in early September. UK Power Networks had assessed the problem as non-urgent and taken this off the works list. Cllr Darbyshire has asked for the works to be reinstated and will report the issue to CCC.

District Cllr Hubbard reported on:

- Her recent meeting with the Comberton Village College Panel to discuss Active Transport and buses. The children are very interested and would like to walk or cycle but do not feel able or sufficiently safe to do so. CVC are looking at a shared use path along the East West Rail route to allow safer travel.
- Cllr Hubbard wished to arrange a meeting open to all Ward residents to find out more about East West Rail, at a date to be confirmed.

1. Apologies for absence and declaration of interests

1.1 To approve written apologies and reasons for absence
Apologies had been received from Cllr Coghlan (unwell).

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 September 2026

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 7 September 2026 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 Update on the former Methodist Chapel

Cllr Yeadon reported that the Plymouth Brethren had kindly given permission for the Remembrance Service at the former Methodist Chapel to go ahead, and they would unlock the car park.

It was noted that the bench at the front of the Chapel had been donated by a resident, and bore a plaque saying "Toft Church invites you to rest a while." Cllr Yeadon had written to several residents who had been involved with the former Methodist Chapel and to the Plymouth Brethren to ask whether the bench could be used at The Drift.

Cllr Yeadon had also written to the local family, who were the only known descendants of the families on the Memorial, about the possibility of moving it, and was awaiting a reply. He has also asked the Plymouth Brethren about their offer of an architect and the possibility of funding.

3.2 (3.4) To consider the RoSPA report and swing repair – update
Cllr Yeadon reported that the bearings cost £467.00 each and two were required.
RESOLVED, noting that the item scored the lowest possible level of risk in the RoSPA report, not to repair the bearings at this time, and to continue to monitor the swing. (Prop MY, 2nd EM, unanimous)

3.3 (3.5) Purchase of a new bench for the Drift - update
RESOLVED to await the outcome of discussions about the former Methodist Chapel bench.

3.4 (3.5) To consider the condition of the bench in Brookside
Cllr Miles reported that the bench was very overgrown with nettles and needed renovation. An alternative location was discussed.
RESOLVED to defer a decision on moving the bench until the refurbishment had taken place.
RESOLVED, having discussed the maintenance of the hedges nearby as they were very overgrown, that Cllr Darbyshire should report the hedges to CCC.

3.5 (3.7, 7.10) Refurbishment of benches and map signs – to confirm acceptance of quotation and update on map sign
RESOLVED to confirm acceptance of the quotation from PDS Decorating for £1,693.85, as being the lowest quote received.
RESOLVED to note that the map sign from Brookside has been retrieved and is being looked after by Cllr Yeadon, and that this will not be re-installed at this time but will be kept in reserve.

3.6 (3.8) Website and email updates
RESOLVED to note that the new emails were now working. Some Parish Council information had been transferred to the new site. The minutes are to be transferred over.
RESOLVED that Cllrs Darbyshire and Howling should look at a news section.

3.7 (7.9) Roadside advertising and future actions
RESOLVED, noting that CCC had incorrectly responded that the signage was not on their land, that the Council should write to Revive and to the Shop, to highlight that the signage blocks visibility for drivers and makes the village look untidy, and that roadside signage requires CCC permission.

3.8 (7.11) Speed monitor results and Speed Watch update
Cllr Yeadon had circulated the Speed Watch results, which were very similar to the previous data. The worst results were for traffic leaving Toft towards Comberton. It was believed that the MVAS still picks up speeds a fair distance down the road when drivers believe they have left the village. Speed Watch had held some sessions but are short of volunteers.

3.9 (3.6 of 6.7.26) Agreement to paint the fence at rear of Queen's Platinum Jubilee area
RESOLVED to note that the order had been placed.

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

4.1 CIPFA consultation on proposed new Proper Practices Framework (deadline 31 October)
Noted.

4.2 SCDC – Six Free Trees Scheme (deadline 31 October)
RESOLVED that Cllr Yeadon should apply for one Holm Oak tree in a pot for planting.

4.3 CCC Community Gritting scheme volunteers
RESOLVED that Cllr Miles should place a note in the Calendar seeking volunteers.

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 LGS Services (Admin support July) £506.48,

LGS Services (Admin support August) £545.44, and LGS Services (Admin support September £545.44. (Prop MY, 2nd ED, unanimous)

Salaries		£529.20
Zurich	Insurance premium	£396.00

Receipt of the verges grant was noted.

5.2 To receive play inspection reports and consider any work required
Cllr Yeadon reported that there was a stripped bolt on the the toddler swing and a new seat was required, but it was still safe to use.

5.3 To consider any matter which is urgent because of risk or health and safety and relates to Council property
None.

5.4 To consider the Insurance renewal
RESOLVED to renew the insurance cover with Zurich for an annual premium of £396.00.

5.5 To consider the Internal Auditor's report and appointment of Internal Auditor for FY2027
The Internal Auditor's report was noted.
RESOLVED to re-send the list of training available.
RESOLVED, having considered their independence and competence, to re-appoint Clerk's Compliance as Internal Auditors for FY2027.

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

6.1 Planning applications received – to be considered

6.1.1 26/03694/HFUL – 7 Mill Lane – Single storey rear extension, following demolition of the existing conservatory and single-storey element
RESOLVED to make no comments.

6.2 Planning applications for which a response has been made between meetings using delegated powers – to be noted
None.

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

6.4 Tree works applications
None.

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

7.1 Village Maintenance
Nothing further to report.

7.2 Highways
Cllr Darbyshire had reported several items. The "Road Closed" signage had been removed. The sign at Pinfold Well Lane is still present as the repair work is still on the list to be carried out.
Cllr Darbyshire provided an update on her enquiries about a possible pedestrian crossing in the High Street. CCC had confirmed that their previous conclusion, that there was no practical and safe place to install it, was still the case.
Overgrown greenery at Brookside and School Lane will be reported by Cllr Darbyshire.
Cllr Darbyshire had asked for an update about scraping back the soil and undergrowth on the shared use path. The work had gone out to tender.
The 20 mph application. Toft had risen up the list but had not been successful. The village was in fifteenth place and only the top seven had been approved. It was noted that the application window had been extended for next time.

7.3 Toft People's Hall

7.3.1 Toft People's Hall application for improvements to the Hall and possible request for funding; and People's Hall door move

Taken earlier.

7.4 Footpaths
Cllr Miles reported that all was in order. She is planning to devise a walk around the village benches.

7.5 Defibrillator report
Cllr McCarthy reported that the new battery was up and running and the defibrillator was now live. He had been in touch with the Community Heartbeat Trust about replacing the First Aid kit.
It was noted that a number of VETS volunteers on the list might no longer be in the village, and more volunteers were needed.
RESOLVED that Cllr Miles should place a note in the Calendar and that Cllr McCarthy should contact the volunteers to see who is available.
RESOLVED to send Cllr McCarthy the MAGPAS training details.

7.6 Birdlings liaison
There was no update.

7.7 East West Rail
There were no new developments. Cllr Hubbard is organising a village meeting.

7.8 Disaster Management/Emergency Plan
Cllr Howling gave an update on the plan and summarised the background. CCC and SCDC had provided a contact for further collaboration. The responses received so far had been very supportive. Cllr Howling will look at individual plans and also cluster arrangements with other villages, and will circulate the draft plan to Councillors for their comments. The draft plan will require a risk assessment and a contact directory.
The Parish Council considered the possibility of discussions with other councils. A possible green corridor project is being investigated with Comberton Parish Council.

7.9 Speed Monitor results
Taken earlier.

On a proposition by the Chairman, the following items were taken together.

7.10 Playground use and engagement
7.11 Newcomer and wider village participation
Cllr Howling reported. He asked whether there was an appetite for carrying out surveys in the village on the needs or wants of residents, with a view to gaining information on what equipment people use, and what demographics use it.
A discussion took place about the use of the play area.
RESOLVED to give further consideration to the purposes for which the data would be used.

8. Closure of meeting
There was no further business and the meeting closed at 9.08 pm.

Signed …….Chairman ……date.