

NOTES OF MEETING



Braintree District Parish & Town Clerks' Network

Date: 22nd February 2007

Contact: Linda Hadley
Parish Liaison Officer
Braintree District Council
Causeway House
Braintree
Essex
CM7 9HB

Tel: 01376 551414 Ext: 2343

Email: Linda.Hadley@braintree.gov.uk

Present:

Belchamp Water	Barbara Raybould
Birdbrook	Susan De Luca
Colne Engaine	Laura La Roche
Earls Colne	Pam Herbert
Finchingfield/Great Bardfield	Kate Fox
Gosfield	Joanne Main
Great Notley/White Notley & Faulkbourne	Angela Balcombe
Great Saling/Shalford	Cathryn Carlisle
Halstead	Paul Tetley
Hatfield Peverel	Eric Windus
Kelvedon	Jill Hinds
Panfield	Sheila Stubbs
Rivenhall	Keith Taylor
Sible Hedingham/Little Yeldham, Ovington, Tilbury Juxta Clare	Adrian Corder-Birch
Stambourne	Fiona Bayley
Stisted	Nichola Challis
Wethersfield	John Sheldrake

BDC Cllr. Wendy Scattergood – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Rural Issues
Kitty Barrett - Rural Policy & Development Officer
Linda Hadley - Parish Liaison Officer
Stephen Phillips - Electoral Services Officer
David Triggs - Democratic Services Manager

Apologies:

Helena Carter, Jane Coleman, Phillip Cox, Tony Dunn, Janet Eady, Paul Evans, Audrey Harrington, Denise Humphris, Karen Melville-Ross, Sue Stewart, Frances Wells, David Williams

- Councillor Wendy Scattergood welcomed everyone to the meeting followed by an introduction to the agenda from Kitty Barrett.
- David Triggs, Democratic Services Manager and Stephen Phillips, Electoral Services Officer, gave brief presentations on Democracy and Elections, followed by a tour of the 'website' and a question and answer session. A Timetable of Proceedings for 3rd May 2007 elections was distributed. *(post meeting note: For those Clerks not at the meeting, the timetable will be sent to all parishes by Democratic Services)*
- A few changes to the election process were noted:-
 - The 'count' will take place during the day (Friday 4th) – mainly due to the later closing for polling stations and will be held at Towerlands.
 - A 'webcast' for the results is being worked on and may be available this year.
- Kitty Barrett gave the results of the short questionnaire which had been sent to clerks on frequency and timing of meetings. (Appendix – on reverse of page 3) From these results it was agreed, for the time being, meetings should be held twice yearly (February and September) in the evenings. After a brief discussion, it was also agreed that the administration for the meetings would continue to be undertaken by BDC Rural Issues and Parish Liaison Team.
- There was an overwhelming thank you and good luck to Helen Riches from those present, on hearing she will no longer be Cluster Meeting Co-ordinator. Helen will be concentrating more on quality auditing within the BDC Policy and Performance Team. Linda Hadley, Parish Liaison Officer, will be taking on cluster meeting co-ordination.
- John Sheldrake JP, Parish Clerk to Wethersfield, mentioned how useful Planning Online has been – this was backed-up by many of the clerks attending.
- The suggestions for topics for future meetings are as follows:
 - Cemeteries
 - 'Green' Policy
 - Pro's and Cons of Quality Councils
 - Cluster meetings
 - Community Wardens – monthly reports
 - How to persuade people to become parish councillors?
 - Consultation Documents – are these always relevant to parish councils?
 - Changes in legislation
 - Freedom of Information/Data Protection

- The following were suggestions for the kind of information which could be shared at future meetings:-
 - Employment issues – salaries and pensions
 - General aspects of the work of a clerk
 - Procedures
 - Suppliers
 - Cost comparisons
 - New equipment i.e. play/office
 - Quality status

- The following were suggestions as to the benefits of having a clerks' network:-
 - Sharing problems and solutions
 - Putting faces to names
 - Meeting fellow clerks from same district
 - Hearing about unusual problems
 - Knowing you're not alone!
 - Sharing experiences

- Kitty Barrett thanked all for coming to the meeting.

- Finally, those clerks who would be happy to be contacted occasionally by new clerks for help and guidance are listed below:
 - **Adrian Corder-Birch** (Sible Hedingham, Little Yeldham, Ovington & Tilbury Juxta Clare) – Tel: 01787 462568 Email: clerk@siblehedinghampc.org.uk

 - **Kate Fox** (Great Bardfield and Finchingfield) – Tel: 01371 810111 Email: clerk@greatbardfield-pc.gov.uk

 - **Jill Hinds** (Kelvedon) – Tel: 01376 570508 Email: info@kelvedon.org.uk

 - **Keith Taylor** (Rivenhall) – Tel: 01376 516975 Email: kpt1@beeb.net

 - **Susan de Luca** (Birdbrook) – Tel: 01371 856068 Email: birdbrookpc@hotmail.com

 - **Angela Balcombe** (Great Notley, White Notley & Faulkbourne) – Tel: 01376 550927 Email: angiewnpc@aol.com

(Appendix)

**Results of Survey on Meeting Frequency etc
(Sent out with agenda)**

1	Would you like to attend future meetings?	30
2	Would you prefer quarterly meetings?	2
3	Would you prefer twice yearly meetings?	15
4	Would you prefer daytime meetings?	8
5	Would you prefer evening meetings?	11