

Thriplow Parish Council

Minutes of an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 20th October 2008 at 7.40 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Terry Smith
Councillors: Kevin Clarke, Anthony Cooper, David Easthope, Jane Gough, Barbara Pointon,
Clerk: Pat Easthope

Action

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllrs. Colin Rothwell, Tim Spicer, Derek Pinner

2. Funding to support the "Stop the Closure of Thriplow Post Office" campaign

Cllr Easthope declared an interest in this item as he is currently chairman of the Thriplow Village Shop Association and he and the clerk are also Sunday volunteers. Further, both he and the clerk are owed money by the TVSA. Cllrs Smith and Clarke are also volunteer helpers in the shop. During discussion that followed it was agreed that in a small community such as ours almost everyone in the village is involved with the shop in some way or another. The village gave the parish council a mandate to fight the proposed P O closure at the open public meeting held on 25th September and the parish council must now do this to the best of their ability.

The chairman explained that the purpose of this meeting is to seek parish councillors' approval to meet the costs of the campaign. Cllr Clarke said that it was envisaged these costs would mainly be for paper, copying, postage, etc. He had originally thought that £200 would be enough but Cllr Pinner had suggested £250. The clerk (&R.F.O) recommended that a sum £500 should be considered as it would seem sensible to agree enough funding to cover all expenses at this meeting rather than leaving the possibility of another meeting having to be called to agree further funding should this be necessary at a later date.

Cllr Jane Gough proposed, and Cllr Anthony Cooper seconded, that the sum of £500 be allocated to meet expenses incurred by the Save the Post Office committee. This was unanimously agreed.

Invoices must be obtained for any expenses and these must be given to the clerk who will arrange for reimbursement to be made.

The chairman then asked Cllr Clarke to give an update of the campaign so far.

Cllr Clarke said that following the first public meeting on 25th September general awareness had now been raised throughout the village. On Thursday 23rd a meeting has been arranged with Laura Tarling and Sally Hopkins (PO reps) at which the branch access report will be challenged. This will not be a public meeting but various members of the committee and others will each give a short presentation on reasons why the post office should not be closed, each presenter giving the views of different sections of the community, i.e. business, charities, elderly, young mums, etc. Our County Councillor Tim Stone, District Councillor Peter Topping and MP Andrew Lansley will also be present.

The village hall has been booked for a second public meeting on Thursday 30 October when residents will be updated on progress.

In the meantime, Cllr Clarke asked all councillors to encourage as many people as possible to write protesting against the proposed closure. Letters can be left in the shop and they will be then be photocopied. A package containing copies of all the letters will then be sent to each person or organisation who we have been advised should receive them. It would be preferable to have as many letters as possible by Thursday of this week so that all the originals can be handed directly to Laura Tarling. Although letters can still be sent after Thursday it was felt that a greater impact will be made if a large bundle could be presented to LT at the meeting.

The chairman thanked Cllr Clarke for all his hard work on this campaign.

There being no further business, the chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.