



# Toppesfield Parish Council



## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 Via Zoom at 7.30pm

### 20/153. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

#### The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard – Chair  
Councillor Chris Neale – Vice chair  
Councillor Amanda Smith  
Councillor Boyd Page

Also, in attendance:

No members of the public joined the meeting  
District Councillor Richard van Dulken  
Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Andrea Chinery

### 20/154. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

No declarations of Members interests were made.

### 20/155. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported the following:

- The number of reported fly tipping cases increase by 17 this year. There are approximately 300 reports each year.
- There has not been much progress to report regarding the local government re-organisation plans.
- The covid-19 rates in Braintree were on average for the last days 13 in 100,000.
- Philip Rawlinson has taken on the role of chairman at Great Yeldham Parish Council and it is hoped a Network 5 meeting will be arranged in the near future.

### 20/156. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor Page and seconded by Councillor Smith that the minutes of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 were signed as a true record of the meeting. This was agreed and the minutes signed.

### 20/157. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

Councillor Page presented a quote for materials to repair the village gates on the Great Yeldham Road – this will be placed on the agenda for November for discussion.

Councillor Collard reported that Councillor Stafford-Baker has resigned from the Parish Council and thanked him for all his hard work during his time on the parish council and for all the work he does around the village.

### 20/158. Actions from previous meeting:

- 20/158.1 Councillor Stafford-Baker to draft a plan for reduced verge cutting areas. Councillor Collard to enquire what progress had been made regarding this. It was agreed it would be preferable to have this in place for Spring 2021.
- 20/158.2 Councillor Smith to contact County Broadband/contractors regarding recent works along The Causeway and concerns regarding the tarmac sealing. Councillor Smith reported this is still ongoing.

- 20/158.3 Councillor Smith to research into how often commercial waste vehicles need to be emptied. It was reported that 'A carrier can leave waste on a vehicle overnight or for a few days, provided the waste is secure and no treatment of it is carried out during this time. Waste should be moved to a site with permission to accept it as soon as possible however there are certain circumstances where this may not be the same day. In these circumstances, we would allow the carrier to store the waste on the vehicle until the site reopened.'
- 20/158.4 Clerk to check regulations regarding being a signatory on the parish account and look into closing the National Savings Account. The clerk/RFO should only be a signatory in conjunction with 2 other councillor signatories. The council may make payments either electronically or by cheque, and there should be a system in place to reduce the risk of error or fraud. The form to close the National Savings Account and transfer it to the Parish Council Barclays account has been obtained for completion.
- 20/158.5 Councillor Page to check the spacing of the swings at Gainsford End and remove if necessary, to assist with social distancing. Councillor Page reported that he has removed one of the swings to maintain the social distancing guidance.

Social Distancing was discussed and the fact that parents seem to gather in the playing fields after school and some are not adhering to the social distancing rules. Councillor Smith to speak to the head of the school to remind parents to socially distance and adhere to the signs in the park that are giving guidance during the covid outbreak.

**20/159. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:**

- 20/159.1 Neighbourhood Plan Update – Councillor Page stated there is nothing further to report at this stage but will ask Nigel Meek who is leading the project to hold a zoom meeting to update all Councillors on progress so far and what the current position is.
- 20/159.2 Update from Project Working Group – Councillor Collard reported that the feedback from Toppesfield Community Pub (TCP) is that they are willing to consider selling the barn to the parish council as long as it does not compete with the pub. A small working group from TCP will work with the parish council take this forward. Councillor Collard is working on taking this forward and others are compiling costings. A more detailed update will be available next month.
- 20/159.3 Co-option of Councillors – confirmation from Braintree District Council has been received that one councillor can be co-opted and once further confirmation that a second councillor can be co-opted the parish council will look to fill these as positions as soon as ~~there~~ are able to. It was discussed that a representative from Gainsford End and a more diverse make up of the parish council would be ideal.
- 20/159.4 Planning for further Covid-19 restrictions. Should we reactivate the TGE Response group – discussions were held and it was agreed that as restrictions increase the group may need to be resurrected but new volunteers could be required to manage it.
- 20/159.5 Remembrance Day – proposal to purchase Poppy wreath. It was proposed by Councillor Page that a Poppy Wreath be purchased and Councillor Smith seconded this. This was agreed by all present. Clerk to arrange.
- 20/159.6 Christmas – what could/should we plan for? Due to current covid-19 restrictions the usual Christmas event is unlikely to take place. Prices to be sought for Christmas trees. It was suggested that additional items are purchased to light up the village and that a best decorated house competition be held.

**20/160 Correspondence Received:**

- 20/160.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – these were circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 20/160.2 RCCE Annual General Meeting will take place by zoom video conference on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October, commencing at 6pm.
- 20/160.3 Age Concern Colchester and North East Essex – funding request received.

20/160.4 Braintree District Council - Covid volunteers – Braintree District Council are enquiring if ‘there is the resources and willingness from your parish councillors and or community/local volunteers to step up the support and assistance you gave to members of your local community during the initial lockdown should the need arise.’ This would be covered by the Toppesfield & Gainsford End response group but may include different volunteers.

**Late correspondence:**

Letter of thanks received from V Turner, Toppesfield Bellringers for the donations towards the new bell ropes.

**20/161. Financial Accounts:**

20/161.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. Councillor Neale proposed the payments were accepted and Councillor Collard seconded this. See Appendix A.

20/161.2 Accounts year ending 31 March 2020 - To approve the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements on the annual return. The statements were approved and signed.

20/161.3 Request for a dog waste bin along Park Lane – Clerk to contact Braintree District Council to see if they would provide and empty a dog waste bin along Park Lane and one at Gainsford End playing field.

**20/162. Highways:**

20/162.1 Proposal to attempt the adoption/purchase/ gaining of permissive rights of the access way to the pumping station next to the Village Hall – Councillor Collard to enquire about progress made.

It was noted that a letter is being sent to the owner of the abandoned vehicle by the solicitors.

**20/163. Planning:**

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
20/00282/TPO	Notice of intent to carry out works to tree in a Conservation Area - Reduce Apple tree by 2 meters lifting off roof by one meter and thin by 30%	4 The Street Toppesfield Essex CO9 4DJ	Comments to Braintree District Council by  7 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
20/01457/HH	Replacement of existing rear conservatory with a single storey rear extension.	3 The Street Toppesfield Essex CO9 4DJ	Comments to Braintree District Council by  13 <sup>th</sup> October 2020

The above planning applications were discussed and no objections to either were made.

**20/164. Playing Fields & The Dick Ruggles Pavilion** – there was nothing to report at this moment.

**20/165. Communications**

20/165.1 Website - information from Councillors still required and suggestions for additional content or changes were requested.

**20/166. Information exchange / Parish Surgery / Items for the next agenda**

No parish surgeries are being held at present.

Ideas for projects along with costings are required ahead of setting next year’s budget.

**20/167. Date of the next meeting:**

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7.30pm – this may be via Zoom or at Toppesfield Village Hall depending on government advice at the time.

**20/168. Close**  
 The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Signed:

Dated:

**Action Summary:**

- Clerk to contact Stambourne Parish Council's clerk re Network 5 meetings.**
- Councillor Page to develop a plan for reduced verge cutting areas.**
- Councillor Smith to report the progress with County Broadband/contractors regarding works along The Causeway and concerns regarding the tarmac sealing.**
- Councillor Smith to liaise with the school's headteacher and ask her to remind parents to socially distance and adhere to the signs in the park.**
- Councillor Page to ask Nigel Meek to arrange a zoom meeting for all councillors to be updated on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and what the current position is.**
- Councillor Neale and the clerk to seek prices for Christmas trees and decorations.**
- Clerk to contact Braintree District Council re dog waste bins for Park Lane and Gainsford End playing field.**

**Appendix A**

Accounts - 1 October 2020		£		£	
National Savings Deposit Account:					
Balance as at 1st January 2020		<u>£2,646.58</u>			
Community Account					
Balance as at 30 September 2020				<u>£30,021.58</u>	
Subtotal:		<u>£2,646.58</u>			
All previous issued cheques cashed balance should be		<u>£2,646.58</u>		<u>£21,451.58</u>	
Income Received (included in the balance figure of 30 September 2020)					
24.09.20	Braintree District Council - 2nd instalment of precept			£8,626.00	
19.09.20	Donation towards D Dyson Memorial Bench			£10.00	
				<u>£8,636.00</u>	
Payments to be approved:					
Date of invoice			Chq No:		Unrecoverable VAT
01.09.20	Mr B Page - Football nets, clips and pegs		By Bacs	£122.40	£0.00
Sep-20	The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal		101960	£22.50	£0.00
Sep-20	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		Direct Debit	£66.00	£0.00
30.09.20	K Berry - September wages		By Bacs	£380.94	£0.00
				<u>£591.84</u>	
				<u>£29,495.74</u>	