



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th June 2020 Via Zoom at 7.30pm

20/90. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard - Chair
Councillor Boyd Page
Councillor Chris Neale
Councillor Robert Stafford-Baker

Also, in attendance:

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

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Andrew Bull
Councillor Andrea Chinery
Councillor Amanda Smith

20/91. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

No declarations of Members interests were made.

20/92. Open Session – *opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.*

County Council gave an update on measures taken by Essex County Council during the covid-19 pandemic – please see Appendix A.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported that a special fund at Braintree District Council has been set up for discretionary grants for registered companies who did not qualify for other grants. Names of these companies need to be passed to him by the end of the week.

The Councillors Community Grant for this year is available to groups to help with the covid-19 crisis.

Braintree are reinstating bulky waste collections and green waste collections will take place every 4 weeks for residents. Tetra packaging disposal bins will be going in around the district – details of locations will be published in due course.

Braintree District Council are holding virtual meeting at present.

Richard also congratulated those people who have been involved with the volunteer group within the parish to help with the current crisis.

20/93. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th May 2020 were signed as a true record of the meeting. This was proposed by Councillor Neale and seconded by Councillor Page.

20/94. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

There were no matters arising.

20/95. Actions from previous meeting:

- 20/95.1 Councillor Collard to write to the village hall committee – a letter has been drafted but a few points need clarifying. The letter will be circulated to councillors for comments before it is sent.
- 20/95.2 Councillors with signing powers are to contact the bank directly to sign themselves up for electronic banking. Councillor Collard has signed up and Councillor Neale is waiting for postal information.
- 20/95.3 All information regarding bench costings and potential memorial benches to be presented at the next meeting. The bench in the churchyard will be replaced by the Mortlock family as it was placed there in memory of tom Mortlock's son.
- The bench on the hill near Hill Farm can be replaced by the parish council as the Mortlock family do not mind what is done with the bench.
- The idea of a memorial bench for Dave Dyson was received well by Margaret Dyson. Suggested locations for this were on the corner of Camoise Close near to their home or on the piece of land behind the pub as this is near to the three community ventures Dave was involved with.
- Councillor Stafford-Baker reported that he has had an offer of a second hand bench for the Gainsford End park. The parish council agreed that they will install a bench that conforms to current standards and is in keeping with the newly installed equipment. The cost of this will be £250 – 300 and Councillors Page and Stafford-Baker will install it. Options for benches will be circulated prior to the next meeting.
- It was suggested that donations would be invited for the memorial bench for Dave Dyson as some parishioners had expressed an interest in contributing.

20/96. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

- 20/96.1 Toppesfield and Gainsford End Response Group update – Councillor Page reported that the group is working well. Prescriptions are still being collected and delivered. The shop is still providing help however, demand is starting to slow down. Sally has dealt with a few issues on the pastoral care side and Councillor Smith is working with Stambourne Parish Council to provide food parcels in their parish and ours and the 3 dedicated phone lines are still in use.
- 20/96.2 Neighbourhood Plan Update – Councillor Page reported that Housing Needs Survey submission date has passed and there was a 34% response rate which equates to 74 households. The final feedback from the survey will be provided by the RCCE in due course. Work on the design codes package is starting where properties and aspects of the village are being looked at and what people like about them – at present information is being gathered for this.

20/97. Correspondence Received:

- 20/97.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 20/97.2 EALC - Community Initiative Fund Launch 2020/21 – information circulated all Councillors. This will be forwarded to the village hall, Toppesfield Community Pub and the shop committee.
- 20/97.3 Mark Jackson Planning have on behalf of my clients submitted a full application for two cottages at the rear of Church Farm Barn, Church Lane, to replace the grain store. Parish Council meeting 5th March 2020 minutes - the reference number given in the first paragraph of open session should be 19/01435/OUT not 15/01435/OUT.

20/98. Financial Accounts:

- 20/98.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received and payments approved – see Appendix B. The payment for Sovereign is still to be held until the project has been signed off. It was also agreed to cancel the payment to Commicorp and that Councillors will no longer received the Clerk & Councils direct publication.

20/99. Highways:

20/99.1 Report of a continued unoccupied Greenfield Housing Association Bungalow in Toppesfield (BP)

20/99.2 ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1) - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Gainsford End Road, Toppesfield. Please see <https://one.network/?tm=116507210> to find details of the intended closure of Gainsford End Road, due to commence on 15th June 2020 for 82 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes bridge replacement works.

Further information regarding this has been received and work will now commence on 16th September 2020 for 80 days.

20/100. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
20/00768/HH	Erection of a 6m square single storey Cart Lodge	Orchard House, Mallows Lane, Gainsford End CO9 4EH	Comments to Braintree District Council by 18 th June 2020

No objections were raised regarding the above application for Orchard House in Mallows Lane.

Planning reference no 20/00844/FUL - Demolition of former grain store and erection of 2 No. 3 bedroom cottages

This application was discussed – access was raised as an issue previously but the number of properties has been reduced and sufficient parking seems to have been allocated. It was suggested that one of the properties could be an affordable housing property but the parish council understand there is no requirement for this. It was commented that the proposed development is a nice one and the parish council are in support of this development.

Application Number 20/00836/LBC - Locksmiths Farm, Robinhood End, Toppesfield has been received – however this does not appear to be in our parish but of the parish of Finchingfield.

20/101. Playing Fields & The Dick Ruggles Pavilion

20/101.1 Gainsford End playing field equipment update (BP)

20/102. Communications

20/102.1 Website update – biographies and photos are still required from Councillor's along with preferred contact method for publication.

20/103. Information exchange / Parish Surgery / Items for the next agenda

A report from the village hall was read out – please see Appendix C.

20/104. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 2nd July 2020 at 7.30pm – this may be via Zoom or to be held at Toppesfield Village Hall depending on government advice at the time.

20/105. Close

The meeting closed at 9.37pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

Councillor Collard to write to the village hall committee.

Councillor Page to circulate options for benches prior to the next meeting for consideration.

Appendix A

Accounts - 4 June 2020		£	£	
National Savings Deposit Account:				
Balance as at 1st January 2020		<u>£2,646.58</u>		
Community Account				
	Balance as at 29 May 2020		<u>£33,278.64</u>	
Subtotal:		<u>£2,646.58</u>		
All previous issued cheques cashed balance should be		<u>£2,646.58</u>	<u>£27,508.72</u>	
Income Received				
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice			Chq No:	Unrecoverable VAT
16.05.20	E.on - Electricity supply to the Pavilion at Toppesfield Playing Field		101945	£8.51 £0.00
21.05.20	Toppesfield Community Shop - Covid-19 support - Food parcels		101946	£35.74 £0.00
29.05.20	Zurich Municipal - Insurance renewal up to 31.05.2021		101947	£920.59 £0.00
31.05.20	K Berry - May wages		101944	£380.94 £0.00
				<u>£1,345.78</u>
Balance		<u>£2,646.58</u>		<u>£26,162.94</u>
Last bank statement received up to 29 May 2020				

Appendix B

Cllr Finch Parish Update – Covid-19 Update

Action taken to date:

Shielding:

Within 48 hours we set up a distribution and call centre in Essex. Local government staff and thousands of the volunteers who signed up via the newly created Essex Welfare Service were the first authority to begin reaching out to and supporting people in Category B. As of today, 5444 residents have been supported by EWS and 978 Emergency Food Deliveries have been made.

Howe Green:

One of our central priorities as part of the response to the crisis has been to move older people out of hospital settings as quickly and as safely as possible for their safety and for the effective operation of hospitals across Essex.

Thanks to funding from MHCLG, within a period of just two weeks we have created a new 76 bed facility in Essex as step down care. That facility has started admissions this weekend.

Securing PPE using our strategic partners:

Thanks to a strong, 30-year relationship with colleagues from Jiangsu Province in China, we were able to secure 200,000 protective face masks to support critical need across the social care sector in Essex and neighbouring counties.

We have also been dealing with various companies in the UK who have contacted us about providing supplies of PPE.

Infection control in care homes:

We moved quickly in terms of our approach to managing infection in care homes, in readiness for government's change in approach towards tracing and containing spread of the virus, going above and beyond PHE guidance.

The county council, with the NHS and Public Health England (PHE), have stepped up prevention and outbreak management and now cases seem to be declining. We know and are aware of best practice in prevention and stopping outbreaks and are ensuring that care homes can do this - including PPE, reduced staff rotation and minimising visitors.

We have developed local hubs across Essex to ensure strong regular links with care homes.

Essex undertook a national pilot with PHE on testing all staff and residents in care homes with few or no cases. Lessons around how to deal with staff who are positive but have no symptoms have proved important. Now a national testing portal has been set up and all care homes can access this for testing. The council is supporting this by working through the local hubs to ensure the right people tested at the right time and the appropriate action is taken.

Coronavirus Community Facebook Page:

For a number of years, we have been at the forefront of community mobilisation via Facebook. Very early in the outbreak of coronavirus in Essex we activated our network of Facebook Community Group administrators and set up Essex Coronavirus Action, a page that has 36,000 people following it and posts viewed millions of times. Through this page, we've recruited thousands of volunteers for the newly created Essex Welfare Service and shared vital public health messages through our network of other community groups. Our work has been recognised by Facebook who are using it as a case study of good practice.

Care Technology:

This is a difficult and challenging time for the care sector. With vulnerable older people shielding, a depleted care workforce and limited PPE we have been forced to innovate to ensure our service users are receiving the care they need.

Alongside moving our equipment contract to 7 days a week we extended our Care Technology pilot across the whole county. This includes installing digital technology that allows care workers to ‘visit’ up to 2,000 service users remotely, rather than requiring a physical visit. It is of significant benefit to us during lockdown, helping us to safeguard the vulnerable even further.

Country Parks and Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC):

Essex County Council made the decision to close their Country Parks to help limit the spread of coronavirus and with the health and safety of our visitors and staff in mind. This difficult decision followed national guidance around gatherings and social distancing and was put into place after unfortunate scenes of overcrowding in our car parks, and large groups in our open spaces were unable to maintain social distancing.

Local residents can however still access nearby Essex Country Parks via public rights of way.

All Essex Recycling Centres were closed on Monday 23 March until further notice. The decision was made in response to strict government guidelines urging people to stay in their homes to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. There were issues around social distancing at the sites to ensure the safety of both staff and residents as well as the government advice to avoid unnecessary journeys.

Schools and Adult Community Learning (ACL):

Since the start of the crisis schools have remained open to the children of key workers and to vulnerable children.

The figures from Essex schools as of Monday 4 May were:

- Number of schools open: 455
- Number of students attending school: 3,729
- Essex's total school population age 5-18: 214,488
- Percentage of pupils attending school: 1.7%

In terms of schools that are open this varies from day to day. Some are open every day, others not at all, whereas some are opening a few times a week.

ACL the County Council’s in-house adult education service usually delivers courses in its nine Centres, as well as in different out-centres at the heart of the communities. Due to the impact of COVID-19, ACL has been making sure that there is as little interruption to learning as possible. It has successfully moved swiftly in transferring its classroom offer to online, where appropriate. It has not currently been possible to move certain more practical based courses online so ACL tutors are engaging in other activities, such as producing video clips, blogs and articles to keep people engaged and motivated. Tutors are also keeping in contact with learners using social media and emails. These innovative approaches also importantly extend to learners on Supported Learning programmes, with learners on accredited programmes still being supported by their tutor where appropriate with regular phone calls and contact, and many engaging well with online learning.

Budget:

As you might imagine the current situation is making demands on the ECC budget. To date, we have incurred the following additional costs:

PPE	£2m
Residential care	£18.6m
Domiciliary care -	£11.4m
Emergency mortuary facility	£10m
Home adaptations	£1.2m
Payment for increased costs for residential and domiciliary care due to Covid 19 (i.e. buying PPE)	£7m

Recovery:

On Monday, following the statement from the Prime Minister, government guidance was released about the steps towards easing lockdown. We are working on the implications of this for our services and will provide you with news on that soon.

Other news:

The first meeting of the Essex Climate Action Commission took place virtually on 12 May, when it was agreed that there was an urgency to proceed at pace and to be bold in tackling the climate challenge.

The Commission discussed the opportunity to build on the gains that have emerged as a result of Covid 19 – how the public are engaging more with the natural world, walking and cycling more (greener forms of transport) and more people are working from home, including in jobs where this hadn't been thought possible.

They also discussed the challenges arising from Covid-19 – single use plastics making a reappearance, the carrier bag being used more, and the number of home deliveries being made. The commission recognised the important of public safety while balancing the need for responsible purchasing and not losing the momentum that has been made in the fight against plastic and waste.

The Commission will consider six pillars of work, looking at how ambitious, positive solutions and behaviour change can impact on the carbon output of the following:

- Green Infrastructure
- Adapting to a changing climate
- Transport
- Built Environment
- Energy and Waste
- Community Action

The Commission also considered how planned new developments across Essex should be used to test and pilot new ways of working, particularly around waste and transport. Transport was considered to be one of the biggest challenges, but also where some of the biggest gains could be made.

The Commission will next meet in July with a proposed interim report on recommendations to the council being produced for October.

Essex Housing:

Essex Housing have announced that Air Sourced Heat Pumps (ASHPs) will be installed as part of all new developments.

An ASHP is a system that transfers heat from outside to inside a building, or vice versa. In domestic heating use, an ASHP absorbs heat from outside air and releases it inside the building, as hot air, hot water-filled radiators, underfloor heating and/or domestic hot water supply. The same system can often do the reverse in summer, cooling the inside of the house. When correctly specified, an ASHP can offer a full central heating solution and domestic hot water up to 80 °C.

Appendix C

Toppesfield Village Hall Report to Parish Council June 2020

The pre school started back on 1st June, I hear it is all going well and the children are delighted to be back. This is no doubt due to the detailed preparations the pre school committee put into place to ensure the children's safety.

Both the pre school and village hall committee completed the necessary paperwork and risk assessments, following all advice we were given. In addition, as the hall had been standing empty for a number of weeks, we had the water tanks tested and certificated against legionnaires disease.

Currently there are no plans to open the hall for any other hirer. The preschool finishes in 6 weeks time and will have sole use for that period.

We have started to think about reopening when the Government advises that it is possible. We are thinking, creatively, about safe options for events. We will take the opportunity to do some maintenance work over the summer and hope that we can become 'normal' as soon as possible!