



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 18th May 2023 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

Councillor Neale opened the meeting as outgoing chair.

23/82. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2023 - 2024

Councillor Chris Neale proposed Councillor Alan Collard as chair, this was seconded by Councillor Bourlet. Councillor Collard accepted the position for the coming year.

Councillor Alan Collard proposed Councillor Kitty Bourlet as vice- chair, this was seconded by Councillor Smith. Councillor Bourlet accepted the position for the coming year.

Councillor Neale thanked everyone for their work over the last four years and stated that he will still like to be involved as requested by the parish council and hoped to return to the parish council in the future.

23/83. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Kitty Bourlet
Councillor Trisha Roberts
Councillor Frances Winter
Councillor Jeremy Graves
Councillor Chris Neale

Also, in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken
Kaaren Berry – Clerk

Apologies were received from:

County Councillor Peter Schwier

23/84. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items

There were no declarations of interest reported.

23/85. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

Councillor van Dulken reported:

- He has been re-elected for another term
- He is a deputy cabinet member at Braintree District Council (BDC)
- Wethersfield Asylum Centre – Braintree District Council have put in an appeal against the refusal of the High Court injunction. BDC have received assurance that no one will be moved onto the site until the end of June.
- Garden waste charges – BDC are not in a position to make a decision at the moment as to whether or not the charge for the service.
- The planning application for the Mission Hall – looks like the only change is the building has been turned by 90 degrees.

In the open session Cllr Roberts asked what BDC were doing as contingency planning in case the Home Office were successful in establishing an asylum seeker processing centre at Wethersfield. Cllr van Dulken responded

that, as far as he was aware, the attention was on fighting the proposal and no contingency planning was in progress. Cllr Roberts offered to email him with her thoughts and contact details of an organisation in Colchester which provides asylum seeker support on behalf of Colchester council.

23/86. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th April 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

23/87. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only.

The excess of mugs purchased by the shop to mark the Coronation for the children of the parish will be sold in the shop with a couple of pairs being set aside for the Church Supper Auction.

23/88. Actions from previous meeting:

23/88.1 Cllr Neale to update on condition of basketball hoop – Chris Neale and Boyd Page to repair the hoop backboard.

23/88.2 Cllr Neale to arrange the informal strategy working group meeting. Councillor Collard to take this action on and arrange a date.

23/88.3 Clerk to arrange for a waste collection lorry to attend the parish at the end of June. – this has been arranged for the 15th July 2023 – details of times have been published in the newsletter.

23/88.4 Cllr Neale to follow up on the offer of play equipment – the offer will not be taken up due to safety considerations.

23/89. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

23/89.1 Neighbourhood Plan update – Cllr Collard reported the first draft of the plan is nearly complete, some village organisations are still to provide details to go into the plan. It is hoped the draft plan will be completed by the end of June and that a referendum be held in the first quarter of next year.

23/89.2 Joint Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Roberts reported that Finchingfield and Wethersfield have lodged a planning application with BDC for the joint Neighbourhood Plan. WASC have been looking into alternative uses for the airfield site. Cllr Roberts asked if the parish council if some words could be added to the Toppesfield Neighbourhood Plan to reflect co-ordination with the Finchingfield/Wethersfield joint Neighbourhood plan with regard to that proportion of Wethersfield airbase that falls within Toppesfield parish.

Cllr Collard said he was happy to liaise with Finchingfield and Wethersfield parish councils to agree some words and how it would work on a practical basis.

23/89.3 Update on proposed village Charity – Cllr Collard has a meeting with Jan Stobart from the RCCE this week for advice on how to move this project forward.

23/89.4 Wethersfield Airfield and Asylum centre update – Cllr Roberts gave an in-depth update and background information for the new Councillors. In 3 other locations the MoJ has had permission for additional building on existing sites turned down, but they are appealing against these. However, the appeal dates keep being pushed backwards. Once the Levelling up bill is passed through Government section 101 will allow them to build what they want, where they want.

Wethersfield Asylum Centre & the Fields Association – there is a report of a meeting with James Cleverley on the SWAP website. A desk top contamination survey has been completed and a full survey on the base with a mitigating plan could take two years to complete.

23/89.5 Doctor Car Service – it was agreed to advertise the service and for volunteers in the next newsletter. Cllr Collard to draw up a rota for the phone which he will hold for the first month.

23/89.6 Overgrown area behind the pavilion – it was agreed this need cutting back and Clerk to gain a quote for the works to be carried out to clear the area.

23/89.7 Gainsford End Signs in need of repair, costs to be agreed for a small works order for sub £500 for materials to complete the repairs. This was proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr Smith in order to repair the signs. A working group is prepared to carry out the work free of charge.

23/89.8 Consider re-establishing a Neighbourhood Watch group – this was discussed and it was agreed that an article be placed in the newsletter and explore its re-instatement.

23/89.9 Appointment of parish council representatives/trustees to the Toppesfield Charities. It was agreed to appoint Cllr Collard and Dusty Millar to the Toppesfield Charities as the parish council representatives.

23/90. Correspondence Received:

23/90.1 EALC Legal & County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.

23/90.2 Braintree District Council - Finchingfield & Wethersfield Neighbourhood Plan - Consultation on Area Designation Application. An application has been submitted to Braintree District Council by the Parish Councils to designate Finchingfield and Wethersfield parishes as a single Neighbourhood Plan Area. The consultation period will officially commence on Thursday 11th May and will close at 4:00pm on Friday 30th June 2023. Before a decision is made on designating the area to which a plan would apply, Braintree District Council need to consult on the area the plan would cover. Further details are set out on their website:

- [Finchingfield and Wethersfield Neighbourhood Plan Application details](#)
- [Public Notice](#)

Clerk to submit a no objection comment to Braintree District Council.

23/90.3 CPRE – Countryside Voices Spring/Summer publication received.

23/90.4 Toppesfield Village Hall Committee – letters regarding clause 8 of the 1961 lease and insurance.

Cllr Winter reported that the village hall committee have agreed to remove clause 8 of their lease, they have been informed this is an administrative change and not a legal one through the Charity Commission. A resolution was made at their AGM and approval from the Charity Commission has been received. The parish council will need to hold a copy of the change alongside the original lease. The RCCE advised the village hall committee as the lease is a Trustee lease they did not need the agreement of the parish council to make the change. As landlords the parish council are to review the position regarding the lease change to ensure it was acceptable.

It was questioned as to who's responsible for electrical checks for the village hall, is it the village hall or parish council. The village hall have recently carried out an electrical check so the next check is due in 5 years. The lease needs to be looked at to understand the responsibilities of the parish council and the village hall committee. The lease is to be circulated to councillors and discussed at the next parish council meeting.

23/91. Financial Accounts:

23/91.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received, Cllr Collard proposed the report is accepted and Cllr Bourlet seconded this. All payments were approved. See Appendix A for details.

23/91.2 Parish Council insurance renewal quotes were received from the current insurers and another company. These were discussed and subject to Cllr Winter reviewing the documents it was agreed to change the parish council insurance to BHIB Councils Insurance.

23/92. Highways:

23/92.1 Road Traffic Regulation ACT 1984 – Section 14(1). Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Gainsford End, Toppesfield. Please click on the following link <https://one.network/?tm=133162099> to find details of the intended closure of Gainsford End, due to commence on 31st May 2023 for 6 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes drainage/ironworks replacement works.

23/92.2 Road Traffic Regulation ACT 1984 – Section 14(1). Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Wesley End Road, Stambourne Road, Stambourne. Please click on the following link <https://one.network/?tm=133296106> to find details of the intended closure of Wesley End Road, Stambourne Road, due to commence on 5th June 2023 for 5 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes carriageway patching.

23/93. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
23/00327/TPOCON	Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area:- Prune tree back 1m to stop overhanging the road.	1 The Street Toppesfield CO9 4DJ	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 25 May 2023

23/01053/REM	Application for the approval of reserved matters (in respect of, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping) pursuant to outline planning permission 21/00574/OUT granted 20.04.2022 (Allowed on appeal) for: the demolition of redundant place of worship, and erection of 1 No. detached dwelling.	Mission Hall Gainsford End Toppesfield CO9 4EG	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 6 June 2023
--------------	---	---	--

The above applications were discussed and no objections were raised to planning application number 23/00327/TPOCON.

The parish council object to Planning Application 23/01053/REM due to the size of the proposed development and it is not in keeping/incompatible with the surrounding properties.

23/94. Communications:

No items were discussed under this heading.

23/95. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

Cllr Smith informed the parish council that as she was not able to form a football team to play on the Toppesfield playing field due to the space the cricket club need she has set up a school football team. Sponsors have been gained for the kit. Cllr Smith asked if in principle the parish council would support a grant application for training equipment. It was suggested that Cllr Smith approach the Councillors Community Grant fund for funds, but an application could also be made to the parish council.

23/96. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 8th June 2023 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

23/97. Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.10pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

- **Cllr Collard to arrange the informal strategy working group meeting.**
- **Cllr Collard to draw up a rota for the Dr Car service.**
- **Cllr Winter to circulate documents regarding the village hall lease and all councillors to review prior to the next parish council meeting.**

Appendix A

Accounts -18th May 2023				
			£	
Community Account				
	Balance as at 15th May 2023		£48,855.72	
All previous payments issued balance should be			<u>£40,118.72</u>	
Income Received Included in the balance figure of 15.05.23				
27.04.23	Braintree District Council - 1st instalment of precept		£8,747.00	
			<u>£8,747.00</u>	
Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance figure on the 15.05.23)				
03.05.23	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply (latest EDF bill shows a credit of £25.95)		£10.00	
			<u>£10.00</u>	
				Unrecoverable VAT
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice		Chq No:		
various	Kitty Bourlet - Reimbursement for items purchased for the Coronation Celebration event	By Bacs	£200.80	£0.00
various	Alan Collard - Reimbursement for items purchased for the Coronation Celebration event	By Bacs	£28.89	£0.00
25.04.23	Kaaren Berry - Reimbursement for items purchased for the Coronation Celebration event & printing of flyers	By Bacs	£72.99	
	Toppesfield Village Hall Committee - Hall Hire for Coronation Celebrations	By Bacs	£20.00	
	Toppesfield Village Hall Committee - 1st Aid Awareness training - Hall Hire	By Bacs	£22.25	
31.03.23	P Munson - advising on draft Neighbourhood plan	By Bacs	£1,500.00	
17.05.23	Paul Clark Printing - Newsletter printing	By Bacs	£300.00	
16.05.23	St Margarets School - Hire of school hall for Coronation Picnic Event	By Bacs	£150.00	
	Groundwork UK - repayment of unspent grant for Neighbourhood plan	By Bacs	£4,550.00	
01.05.23	K Berry - April salary	By Bacs	£502.92	£0.00
			<u>£7,347.85</u>	
			£41,507.87	