



# **Toppesfield Parish Council**



## **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm**

### **23/44. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:**

#### **The following Councillors were in attendance:**

Councillor Chris Neale – Chair  
Councillor Alan Collard  
Councillor Amanda Smith  
Councillor Kitty Bourlet  
Councillor Trisha Roberts

Also, in attendance:

One member of the public  
District Councillor Richard van Dulken  
Kaaren Berry – Clerk

Apologies were received from:

County Councillor Peter Schwier

### **23/45. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items**

No declarations of Members interests were made.

### **23/46. Open Session** – *opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.*

A concern was brought to the attention of the parish council that cars are parking on the pavement along Stambourne Road and so making it difficult or impossible for pedestrians to use them. The problem normally arising in the evening.

It was unsure whether this was a highways or district council issue. Discussions were held and it was agreed in the first instance to do a flyer drop asking people to park considerately.

Councillor Richard Van Dulken provided the following report:

- There had been a fly tipping case along the Great Yeldham Road and as this is on private land the district council are not responsible for clearing it away. Cllr Collard will contact the landowner to make them aware of the fly tip.
- Braintree District council has agreed its budget which gives a 2.5% increase in Council Tax on their proportion. However, Braintree DC will be refunding each council tax payer £25.
- The booking system for the recycling centres will come into force on the 13 March for a trial period.
- Richard attended the gardening club at St Margarets School for a litter pick and enjoyed meeting the pupils and helpers. It was mentioned if it were possible for the school to have painted games on the playground, i.e. hopscotch. Cllr Smith will liaise with the headteacher regarding this.

### **23/47. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February were signed as a true record of the meeting.

### **23/48. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only.**

There were no matters arising.

### **23/49. Actions from previous meeting:**

- 23/49.1 Cllr Neale to progress repairs to the basketball hoop at Toppesfield playing field. The basketball hoop will be removed shortly and its condition investigated as to whether it can be repaired or a replacement is needed.
- 23/49.2 Cllr Neale to arrange the informal strategy working group meeting – carry over to next meeting.
- 23/49.3 Cllr Collard to arrange the village groups meeting – this is booked for the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
- 23/49.4 Cllr Neale to arrange a meeting with the RCCE, Paul Munson, David Oxman, Cllr Collard and Cllr Neale to respond to concerns raised regarding the joint Neighbourhood Plan. A meeting has been held and it was agreed that the parish council are committed to working with the Joint Neighbourhood Plan group and that both plans will be aligned with regards to the airbase.
- 23/49.5 Cllr Neale to purchase 2 sets of lights for the Christmas Tree, outdoor lights for the Pump and baubles for the Christmas tree.
- 23/49.6 Cllr Bourlet to write a volunteers section for the newsletter.
- 23/49.7 Cllr Smith to speak to the Head of St Margaret's School if the school hall could be used as a warm space and if pupils could play board games with those that attend.
- 23/49.8 Cllr Neale to speak to The Green Man to see if they would be willing to open the pub as a warm space and provide soup and a roll.
- 23/49.9 Cllr Neale to confirm a date for a training session to Raise Awareness of 1<sup>st</sup> Aid and use of a Defibrillator.
- 23/49.10 Clerk to do an article for the newsletter seeking volunteers to organise a Street Party on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to celebrate the Kings Coronation.
- 23/49.11 Clerk to enquire with Braintree District Council if they can supply litter picking equipment for the 11<sup>th</sup> March.

### **23/50. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:**

- 23/50.1 Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) & Joint Neighbourhood Plan update. David Oxman and Alan Collard have contacted volunteers who were previously engaged in the NHP to see if they will assist again. Their next meeting will be to divide up responsibilities to volunteers. Joint NHP was discussed under agenda item 23/49.4.
- 23/50.2 Update on proposed village Charity. Cllr Collard has a meeting set up with representatives from the RCCE to get advice on how to progress this project.
- 23/50.3 Wethersfield Airfield proposed development update. Cllr Roberts reported that the Chair of SWAP has stepped back temporarily so during his absence a new chair is in place. The issue of contamination is being looked into a it has been agreed to employ a consultant to do a desktop survey. There had been information from multiple credible sources that the Home Office intend to house 1500 single male asylum seekers on the airfield using a mixture of the existing accommodation and portacabins. The Three Fields association are focusing on the potential 'warehousing' of the Asylum Seekers/Refugees.
- 23/50.4 Park Lane Car Park – was there any feedback from the interested party to purchase the car park. Cllr Collard reported there has been no response to his communication at present.
- 23/50.5 Organise the waste collection lorry for Toppesfield and Gainsford End from Braintree DC as per summer 2021. It was agreed to arrange this for the end of June. Clerk to progress.
- 23/50.6 Annual Parish Meeting - arrangements for meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023. It was agreed the format of the evening would be the same as last year. Clerk to issue invitation letters to the village groups.

### **23/51. Correspondence Received:**

- 23/51.1 EALC Legal & County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 23/51.2 20's Plenty for Us – would Toppesfield Parish Council be interested in taking part in the Campaign more information can be found at: <https://www.20splenty.org/> clerk to circulate email and discuss at the April meeting. It was agreed that more a police presence would help reduce speeding through the village.
- 23/51.3 Solar Farm Wixoe, Cllr D Garrod Bumpstead Ward - Information regarding this has been noted.
- 23/51.4 Offer received of used playground equipment – would the parish council be interested in this. It was agreed the Parish Council would be interested in this but would need to know the requirements for and costs of installation and would a certificate of compliance be issued. Cllr Neale to follow this up.

**23/52. Financial Accounts:**

23/52.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received and approved. See Appendix A for details.

23/52.2 Bank Mandate – addition of signatories to the bank account required. It was agreed to add Cllrs Bourlet and Smith to the bank mandate. Clerk to progress.

**23/53. Highways:**

23/53.1 Parking around the Pump – it was agreed to put a post of Facebook asking people to park responsibly and include an article in the next newsletter regarding this.

**23/54. Planning:**

| Application No: | Description  | Address   | Action   |
|-----------------|--|---|--|
| 23/00337/FUL    | Demolition of garage and erection of 1 No. 2 bedroom dwelling. | Church Farm Barn<br>Church Lane<br>Toppesfield<br>CO9 4DR | Comments to be made to Braintree District Council by 21 March 2023 |

The above application was discussed and the parish council will submit an objection response due to the issues of access, size of building, parking issues and the overdevelopment of the site.

**23/55. Communications:**

23/55.1 Newsletter – comments received and could the newsletter be emailed to residents rather than printed Copies.

It was agreed to place an article in the next newsletter asking for feedback on whether people would like it delivered, emailed or collected from a central point or read it on the website only. Feedback on the content will also be asked for.

**23/56. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda**

Due to the May elections the May parish council meeting will need to be changed to the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**23/57. Date of the next meeting:**

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

**23/58. Close**

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.00pm

Signed:

Dated:

**Action Summary:**

- Cllr Neale to update on condition of basketball hoop.
- Cllr Neale to arrange the informal strategy working group meeting.
- Cllr Neale to confirm a date for a training session to Raise Awareness of 1<sup>st</sup> Aid.
- Clerk to arrange for a waste collection lorry to attend the parish at the end of June.
- Clerk to invite the village groups to the Annual Parish Meeting.
- Cllr Neale to follow up on the offer of play equipment.

## Appendix A

| Accounts -1st March 2023  |   |         | £                 |                   |
|---|---|---------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Community Account   |   |         |                   |                   |
|   | Balance as at 1st March 2023                      |         | £43,049.76        |                   |
| All previous payments issued balance should be  |   |         | <u>£42,868.51</u> |                   |
| Income Received Included in the balance figure of 01.03.23  |   |         |                   |                   |
| 17.02.23  | EALC - bursary payment for Training courses       |         | £191.25           |                   |
|   |   |         | £0.00             |                   |
|   |   |         | <u>£191.25</u>    |                   |
| Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance figure on the 01.03.23) |   |         |                   |                   |
| 01.3.23   | EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply     |         | £10.00            |                   |
|   |   |         | <u>£10.00</u>     |                   |
|   |   |         |                   |                   |
|   |   |         |                   | Unrecoverable VAT |
| Payments to be approved:  |   |         |                   |                   |
| Date of invoice   |   | Chq No: |                   |                   |
| 31.01.23  | CPRE - Annual Membership                          | By Bacs | £36.00            | £0.00             |
| 02.03.23  | Paul Clark Printing - March/April Newsletter      | By Bacs | £300.00           | £0.00             |
| 01.03.23  | Toppesfield Village Hall - quarterly invoice      | By Bacs | £298.50           |                   |
| 22.02.23  | Insurance to cover village hall and shop building | By Bacs | £308.74           |                   |
| 01.03.23  | K Berry - February salary                         | By Bacs | £502.92           | £0.00             |
|   |   |         | <u>£1,446.16</u>  |                   |
|   |   |         |                   |                   |
|   |   |         | £41,603.60        |                   |