



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 3rd August 2023 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

23/129. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard
Councillor Jeremy Graves
Councillor Trisha Roberts
Councillor Frances Winter

Also, in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken
Two members of the public
Kaaren Berry – Clerk

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Kitty Bourlet
Councillor Amanda Smith
County Councillor Peter Schwier

23/130. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items

Cllr Collard declared an interest in agenda item 23/124 and the first planning application listed.

23/131. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

A member of the public raised concerns about the Horse chestnut and Lime trees along the Causeway and around the plots of land adjacent to the Causeway which have recently been sold. Braintree District Council (BDC) have been contacted to find out which trees have TPO's on them. A plan showing the trees with TPO's on them was presented to the parish council. If any work is carried out to the trees this should be reported to BDC immediately.

Councillor van Dulken reported:

- The garden waste charge will start from April 2024, if residents sign up early via their website an early bird discount can be applied. Discounted rate will be £27.50 and full rate is £55.00 for the year. It is an opt in service.
- That he attended a meeting on 31 July at Wethersfield where the Home Office held an open meeting for the public.
- The constituency boundary changes will not affect this area.
- BDC have issued a press release to say their Garden Community and Open Spaces fund is open for applications. Cllr van Dulken suggested that maybe Church Lane byway could incorporate a route for cyclists to join Toppesfield to Great Yeldham and he will speak to his colleagues regarding this.

23/132. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr Graves that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th July 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

23/133. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only.

Cllr Collard has arranged for a Scam and Fraud Awareness session to be held in the village hall on 28th September 2023 at 7pm.

23/134. Co-option of councillors

An application for co-option was received. The Parish Council discussed the application and approved it. Paula Edwards-Holmes was co-opted to the parish council and look forward to her taking up the role of councillor.

23/135. Actions from previous meeting:

- 23/135.1 Clerk to seek costing for potential improvements to the parish office space – a list of costings for items for improvements to the office was supplied and approved. Clerk to purchase items up to a value of £1200 and Cllr Graves to enquire if a decorator can carry out the necessary work during the last week of August 2023.
- 23/135.2 Clerk to contact Cllr Schwier to find out who is the appropriate person in Highways to liaise with regarding the improvements to the pump area project – see agenda point 23/139.2

23/136. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

- 23/136.1 Neighbourhood Plan update – Cllr Collard reported that the draft is almost complete but some information from community groups is still outstanding.
- 23/136.2 Joint Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Collard has not received contact from Wethersfield regarding this but Cllr Roberts reported that the joint plan is progressing well, and a basic brochure has been drawn up and the Levelling up issued also need to be considered in the plan.
- 23/136.3 Update on proposed village Charity – there has been no progress on this since the last meeting.
- 23/136.4 Wethersfield Airfield and Asylum centre update – Cllr Roberts reported that permission was granted for the full Judicial review with is expected in October/November this year. There has been no recent communication from the MoJ to Braintree District Council regarding planning. Forty-six Asylum Seekers are on the base at present with more due to arrive shortly. Large septic tanks are being dug in and pipes are being laid. The Home Office have confirmed one case of scabies and no cases of TB. Two police officers have been appointed for the Wethersfield airbase and they are based at Braintree. At the recent Field Association auction £4600 was raised and half of this will be set aside for legal costs. James Cleverly MP has requested some clarification on several points within the levelling up bill.
- 23/136.5 ROSPA reports and actions need to be taken. Points raised by the inspection were discussed and these will be monitored.
- 23/136.6 Work to rear of the pavilion – some work has been carried out to clear behind the pavilion and further work will be carried out in the Autumn to complete the task.
It was mentioned that there is an overhanging tree from the school grounds which will impact the basketball hoop if it is not trimmed back. This was discussed and agreed that the parish council could trim the tree where it is affecting the hoop.
- 23/136.7 Toppesfield Playing Field – possibility of additional equipment to be installed. Cllr Winter asked if an outdoor table tennis table, similar to the one in the school grounds be installed in the playing fields and if a tennis court has ever been considered for the playing fields. Cllr Winter will liaise with Cllr's Smith and Bourlet in drawing up a plan for both Toppesfield and Gainsford End playing fields.
- 23/136.8 Proposal to remove a dead tree from along The Causeway and its possible replacement. Cllr Collard reported that one of the flowering cherry trees along The Causeway has died. It was agreed that this should be removed and replaced. Cllr Collard to report back at the next meeting with a proposal and costs.
- 23/136.9 To confirm eligibility and adopt the General Power of Competence Eligibility requires that at least two-thirds of Members were elected, and the Clerk is trained and qualified, Localism Act 2011 s1(1) It was resolved that from 3rd August 2023 until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 s1(1) The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.
- 23/136.10 Review of council policies required – policies due for renewal will be updated and circulated for comment. As there are a few polices that are in need of review these will be completed over the next few months.

23/137. Correspondence Received:

- 23/137.1 EALC Legal & County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.

- 23/137.2 Essex County Council are urging residents to complete countywide Community Safety Survey to identify priorities to help tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in Essex has been launched. The survey covers all types of crime including burglary, theft, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour. The survey is open until 20 August 2023. To take part, visit: https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/equalities-and-partnership/community_safety_survey_2023 This will be advertised on the village Facebook page to encourage residents to complete the survey.
- 23/137.3 Essex Highways have just launched a consultation on their Supported Local Bus Services 2024 - 2028. They would like to obtain people's views to help us shape our bus network across the County. This consultation does not include the commercial bus network. The consultation commences 14 July 2023 and closes 05 October 2023. Please complete the survey online by visiting the web site <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/iptu/2023>
- 23/137.4 RCCE - 'Helping communities deliver net-zero: housing and energy'. A in-person event will be held at Anglia Ruskin University's Chelmsford campus on Tuesday 5th September, 9.30am-4.30pm. The event will showcase the latest developments in community energy and community-led housing, presented by the groups and practitioners who are developing these projects. Registration is now open and can be completed at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/helping-communities-deliver-net-zero-housing-energy-tickets-558185857927> Cllr Collard is hoping to attend this event.
- 23/137.5 BASICS Essex – Volunteer Immediate Care Doctors & Paramedics – request for financial assistance. This was discussed and it was agreed not to send a financial contribution.
- 23/137.6 Cllr R van Dulken - A public consultation on the Stansted Airport draft "Noise Action Plan" for the years 2024-28, information on which is available at <https://www.stanstedairport.com/community/>. If the Parish Council or individuals would like to comment on the draft Noise Action Plan (and if needed, take the opportunity to comment on aircraft noise in Yeldham Ward generally) please use the links in the Stansted Airport website mentioned above. The consultation period ends at the end of August 2023.

23/138. Financial Accounts:

- 23/138.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received. It was agreed that the payment in respect of the pétanque court will be held back until Cllr Collard can raise concerns about some of the finish to the work. All other payments were approved. See Appendix A for details.

23/139. Highways:

- 23/139.1 Park Lane Car Park – information to be supplied to BDC regarding the original purchase of the carpark. Clerk to write to BDC with this information.
- 23/139.2 Potential project for the pump – information required by Highways regarding funding of project including; feasibility studies, planning, design work and the cost of the scheme. This was discussed and it was agreed to contact BDC and look into completing an outline planning permission application.

23/140. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
23/01698/SCR	Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 - Screening Request (Regulation 6) – Solar Farm	Land Adjacent To Toppesfield Hall Great Yeldham Road Toppesfield	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 4 th August 2023
23/01633/LBC	Conversion and extension of holiday accommodation barn to create residential annexe.	Cust Hall Gainsford End Road Toppesfield CO9 4EB	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 15 th August 2023
23/01871/FUL	Change of use of land from agricultural to residential and the stationing of a mobile home.	Plot 1 Land Off Park Lane Toppesfield	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 24 th August 2023

23/00502/OUT	Outline Planning Permission for the construction of 1 No. dwelling with garage/carport with permission sought for Access, Appearance, Layout & scale with Landscaping reserved.	Part OS 6961 Rear Of Mission Hall Gainsford End Toppesfield	Braintree District Council planning decision: Refused
/23/01399/FUL	Demolition of former grain store and erection of 2 No. 3 bedroom cottages	Church Farm Barn Church Lane Toppesfield CO9 4DR	Braintree District Council planning decision: Granted
23/01434/FUL	Construction of agricultural building	Land East Of Meads Farm House Great Yeldham Road Toppesfield CO9 4LS	Braintree District Council planning decision: Refused

The above applications were discussed and the parish council decisions were as follows:

Planning application 23/01698/SCR – The parish council agree that an EIA/Screening request be carried out. The parish council are enthusiastic about the application and see it as a way of enhancing the environment as well as reducing carbon footprint. The parish council fully support this proposal.

Planning application 23/01633/LBC – The parish council fully support this application.

Planning application 23/01871/FUL – The parish council strongly object to this application as it is not in keeping with the surroundings and is inappropriate for the setting.

23/141. Communications:

23/141.1 Representatives for WASC and BALC to be appointed. WASC has its next meeting on 29th August, Alan receives information and will circulate it to councillors. An article in the next newsletter will be published asking for volunteers.

BALC – Cllr Winter has asked that information is forwarded to her as she hopes to attend the quarterly meetings.

23/141.2 Facebook administrator to be appointed – volunteers will be sought via an article in the newsletter.

23/141.3 Parish Newsletter distribution and comments received – following the distribution of last newsletter a couple of volunteers have come forward to help deliver them.

A resident has also enquired about Neighbourhood Watch and is looking at how to promote this.

23/142. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

Cllr Roberts resigned her position as councillor as she will be moving from the parish. Cllr Collard thanked Cllr Roberts for all her hard work and support both to the parish council and the village.

23/143. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 7th September 2023 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

23/144. Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.05pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

- **Cllr's Smith, Bourlet and Winter to draw up a plan for both Gainsford End and Toppesfield playing fields.**
- **Cllr Collard to draw up a proposal for the replacement of a Cherry tree along The Causeway.**
- **Clerk to contact BDC with information relating to the original sale of the Park Lane car park.**

Appendix A

Accounts -3rd August 2023				
			£	
Community Account				
	Closing Balance as at 2nd August 2023		£36,506.99	
	All previous payments issued balance should be		<u>£34,684.39</u>	
	Income Received Included in the balance figure of 02.08.23			
13.07.23	Braintree District Council - Street Scene		£1,244.64	
28.07.23	HMRC - VAT reclaim 2022/2023		£587.96	
			<u>£1,832.60</u>	
	Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance figure on the 02.08.23)			
01.08.23	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		£10.00	
	Electric bill has been received and the account is £26.42 in credit			
			<u>£10.00</u>	
	Other payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance figure on 02.08.23)			
			<u>£0.00</u>	
				Unrecoverable VAT
	Payments to be approved:			
Date of invoice		Chq No:		
04.07.23	Paul Chinery - verge cutting in the parish	By Bacs	£660.00	£0.00
17.07.23	K Berry - Reimbursement for office printer	By Bacs	£376.03	£0.00
18.07.23	Braintree District Council - Amenity Vehcile Hire - July 23	By Bacs	£323.00	£0.00
30.07.23	Steve Amerio Contracts Ltd - construction of petanque courts	By Bacs	£6,396.00	£0.00
01.08.23	K Berry - July salary	By Bacs	£502.92	£0.00
			<u>£8,257.95</u>	
			<u>£28,249.04</u>	

