



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 3rd November 2022 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

22/160. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Chris Neale - Chair
Councillor Alan Collard
Councillor Trish Roberts
Councillor Amanda Smith

Also, in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken
County Councillor Peter Schwier
Two members of the public were present
Kaaren Berry – Clerk

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Kitty Bourlet

22/161. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

No declarations of Members interests were made.

22/162. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

The insurance for the village hall building was raised and that the parish council should be responsible for insuring it and not the village hall committee. This could then be recharged to the village hall committee. It was agreed that a meeting be held with members of village hall and shop committees with representatives from the parish council to address this matter.

County Councillor Peter Schwier reported:

- He sent 13 updates out in October to councils
- Essex County Council has a Budget consultation open online until the 28th November 2022.
- Essex County Council has discounted broadband packages available.
- Retrofit – two pilot schemes are running and looking to train assessors.
- Free meals scheme was delivered over the October half term.
- Avian Flu increasing and exclusion zones are now in place.
- Funds are still available from the discretionary grant fund.

Councillor Peter Schwier will contact highways to progress the issues with the road defect on Toppesfield Road and the drainage issues on Church Lane near house number 28.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported:

- Braintree District Council (BDC) website has information and advice on it regarding the cost of living crisis and information regarding warm bank venues.
- There is still some funds available in the Councillors Community Grant fund
- The Sible Hedingham Medical Centre should be open by 2024.

- BDC have an ambition to reach a target of 75% recycling rate. This was 54.4 in September. Essex County Council have a target of 60%. In order to achieve a higher recycling rate more education is required. Unfortunately, across the county 25% of food waste goes into the grey bins.
- Councillor van Dulken is now the vice-chair of the Essex Waste Partnership board.

Concerns were received regarding the works at Toppesfield Hall – these comments were noted.

22/163. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th October 2022 were signed as a true record of the meeting.

22/164. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

There were no matters arising.

22/165. Actions from previous meeting:

22/165.1 Cllr Roberts to give Cllr Neale contact details of Nick Loftus - completed

22/165.2 Cllr Collard to give Cllr Neale contact details of Tom & Robert Mortlock, Keith Ripper and Peter McMillan - completed

22/165.3 Cllr Bourlet to advance purchase of goalposts for GE playing field – purchased and these are to be installed.

22/165.4 Cllr Neale to progress repairs to the basketball hoop at Toppesfield playing field – no progress at present.

22/165.5 Cllr Collard to arrange signature of the contract with Paul Munson re. the NP – this has been signed.

22/165.6 Cllr Neale to arrange the informal strategy working group meeting – no progress at present.

22/165.7 Cllr Neale to arrange the village groups meeting – Councillor Collard to send a doodle poll to the groups.

22/165.8 All councillors to send the Clerk their comments on the proposed policies drafted by the Clerk – comments received and amendments made.

22/165.9 Clerk to contact Plants that Grow about purchase of Christmas tree – cost will be between £250 to £300. An offer of a donated 4.4 metre Christmas tree has been received. It was agreed to see if this was suitable and if so accept the offer.

22/165.10 Cllrs Neale and Collard to speak to the GM about their plans for the tree lighting event on 3rd December – no contact has been made yet but this will be followed up.

22/165.11 All councillors to provide energy saving tips to Cllr Collard – these were provided.

22/165.12 All councillors to send ideas to Cllr Neale regarding possible events to be organised in the VH – these were received.

22/165.13 Cllrs Neale and Collard to prepare draft budget for discussion at November meeting – this will be prepared for discussion at the next meeting.

22/166. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

22/166.1 Neighbourhood Plan update – Grant money has been received, contract signed and the first draft completed. A meeting needs to be arranged to progress the project.

Councillor Roberts reported the joint Neighbourhood plan is progressing and needs signing off.

22/166.2 Update on plans for the Playing Field – it was agreed to progress with the petanque courts and then move onto other projects on the playing field.

22/166.3 Update on proposed village Charity – the Charity Commission have requested more information before this can be progressed.

22/166.4 Wethersfield Airfield proposed development update – Councillor Roberts gave a comprehensive update. The update from WASC is that the initial plan of works is nearly completed. There is an update in the parish newsletter and on the parish council website for information.

22/166.5 Consideration of adopting the following policies:

Communications Protocol, Co Option, Equality Opportunities, Health & Safety, Information and Data Protection, Information Technology and Communications Policy and Reserves.

It was proposed by Cllr Neale that the above policies were adopted, and this was seconded by Cllr Collard. Clerk to upload these to the website.

22/166.6 Christmas event – update on progress of event planning. Plans are progressing and being put in place.

- 22/166.7 Meeting dates for 2023 to be set – these were agreed as:
12th January, 2nd February, 2nd March, 6th April, 27th April for the Annual Parish Meeting, 4th May for the Annual Parish Council Meeting but this may have to be moved to 11th May if there elections are to be held, 8th June, 6th July, 3rd August, 7th September, 5th October, 2nd November and 7th December.
- 22/166.8 Insurance of the Village Hall – clerk to arrange a meeting with the village hall and shop committees.
- 22/166.9 Park Lane Car Park – Cllr Collard asked if the potential sale of the back section of the car park be reconsidered. It was agreed for Cllr Collard to follow this up with the interested party.
- 22/166.10 Braintree Association of Local Council (BALC) meeting feedback – Cllr Roberts attended the meeting via zoom and reported: Roger Hirst made a presentation at the meeting, a number of villages are looking at setting up warm spaces and BDC are looking to map these on their website. Cllr Roberts felt this was a good forum for general discussion.

22/167 Energy Saving tips

- 22/167.1 Parish council to produce or signpost general energy saving tips for the community update – there is an article in the November/December edition of the parish newsletter regarding this.
- 22/167.2 Consideration of and options for a warm bank – it was agreed to work with the village hall committee to put events on. A meeting will be held to discuss this with them.

22/168. Correspondence Received:

- 22/168.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 22/168.2 Essex & Herts Air Ambulance – request for a grant towards purchase of equipment. Requested was discussed and agreed not to donate from Council funds.
- 22/168.3 Essex County Council – Highway User survey is open from Tuesday 11th October 2022 To Wednesday 4th January 2023 for the parish council to complete to help improve their service. Clerk to complete this.
- 22/168.4 County Broadband, Community Support Team – County Broadband are coming back to the village with new offers. As part of their project, they would also like to offer some of their time to the community. They are asking if we knew anyone who would be interested to get a few County Broadband volunteers. They would be happy to help with litter picking, food banks, or any other activity your community might need help for. Also, they have supported the launch of the Hypercharged Foundation which is an independent charity who helps funding community projects and charities with grants from £250 to £5000. Applications can be made online - website: <https://hypercharged.co.uk/> Clerk to respond to say volunteers for the next litter pick would be welcomed and there may be further projects in the New Year they could help with.
- 22/168.5 The Partnership Development Scrutiny Committee at Braintree District Council is undertaking a scrutiny review into 'Litter Management Across the Braintree District.' As part of their Scrutiny Review, Members are exploring the effectiveness of the Council's various partnership working arrangements in respect of Litter Management, how it engages with its partners in this respect, and how coordinated working with its partners could be improved. The Chairman of the Committee is keen that the Committee hear the viewpoints from Parish and Town Councils. Questions have been supplied for response by 2 December 2022. This was discussed and clerk to respond.

Other Correspondence:

ECC Levelling Up – Community Challenge Fund and Survey – Posters have been displayed to advertise the Research and Citizen Insight campaign and information regarding the fund has been received.

22/169. Financial Accounts:

- 22/169.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received and approved. See Appendix A for details.
- 22/169.2 Tenders received for the construction of new pétanque court at Toppesfield playing field to be received, discussed and appointed as appropriate. The tenders were discussed and it was agreed to award the contract to S Amerio Contracts Ltd. Cllr Collard to meet with the petanque group to discuss what funding is available and seek further funding for the project. Cllr Collard to contact those who provided tenders with the Councils decision.

22/169.3 Budget 2023/2024 – draft budget for discussion – this was deferred to next months meeting.

22/170. Highways:

22/170.1 **Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 - SECTION 14(1)**. Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Stambourne Road, Toppesfield. Details can be found at: <https://one.network/?tm=130724059> of the intended closure of Stambourne Road, due to commence on 8th November 2022 for 1 hour. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while UK Power Networks undertakes pole replacement.

22/171. Planning:

| Application No: | Description | Address | Action |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| 22/02748/HH | Erection of 3 storey side extension | 19 Stambourne Road Toppesfield CO9 4DG | Comments to be made to Braintree District Council by 17 th November 2022 |

The above application was discussed and no objections were raised.

22/172. Communications:

No issues were raised or discussed.

22/173. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

The Essex County Council Budget public consultation needs to be advertised.

22/174. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is proposed to be held on 1st December 2022 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

22/175. Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.37pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

- **Cllr Neale to progress repairs to the basketball hoop at Toppesfield playing field**
- **Cllr Neale to arrange the informal strategy working group meeting**
- **Cllr Collard to arrange the village groups meeting**
- **Cllrs Neale and Collard to speak to the GM about their plans for the tree lighting event on 3 December**
- **Clerk to upload adopted policies to the website**
- **Clerk to arrange a meeting with the village hall and shop committee regarding insurance**
- **Cllr Collard to liaise with the previously interested party regarding the potential sale of the back section of the car park in Park Lane**
- **Clerk to complete the Highway User service survey**
- **Cllr Collard to liaise with those who submitted tenders for the Petanque court project.**

Appendix A

| Accounts -3rd November 2022 | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | | | £ | |
| Community Account | | | | |
| | Balance as at 2 November 2022 | | £46,651.96 | |
| | | | | |
| | All previous payments issued balance should be | | <u>£42,979.31</u> | |
| | | | | |
| Income Received | Included in the balance figure of 02.11.22 | | | |
| 24.10.22 | Essex County Council - Verge cutting | | £1,958.54 | |
| 26.10.22 | HMRC - VAT Claim | | <u>£1,724.11</u> | |
| | | | <u>£3,682.65</u> | |
| | | | | |
| Direct Debits | / Payments made since last meeting (included in balance figure of 02.11.22) | | | |
| 01.11.22 | EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply | | £10.00 | |
| | | | | |
| | | | <u>£10.00</u> | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | Unrecoverable VAT |
| Payments to be approved: | | | | |
| Date of invoice | | Chq No: | | |
| Oct-22 | The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal - Poppy Wreath | 101968 | £25.00 | £0.00 |
| 11.10.22 | Essex Association of Local Council - Budget & Precept training course | By Bacs | £84.00 | £0.00 |
| 18.10.22 | Kitty Bourlet - reimbursment for goal & net for Gainsford End | By Bacs | £62.34 | £0.00 |
| 21.10.22 | Information Commissioners office - Data Protection renewal fee | By Bacs | £40.00 | £0.00 |
| 01.11.22 | K Berry - October wages | By Bacs | <u>£502.92</u> | £0.00 |
| | | | <u>£714.26</u> | |
| | | | | |
| | | | £45,937.70 | |