



Toppesfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 5th December 2019 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 7.30pm

19/198. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard - Chair
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Andrea Chinery
Councillor Boyd Page
Councillor Chris Neale
Councillor Robert Stafford-Baker

Also, in attendance:

County Councillor David Finch
District Councillor Richard van Dulken
No other members of the public were in attendance
Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

Apologies were received from

Councillor Andrew Bull - Vice Chair (he attended for Agenda item 19/203.5 only)

19/199. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

Councillors Chris Neale and Boyd Page declared an interest in the Outline Planning application in Park Lane. No other declarations of Members interests were made.

19/200. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

Councillor Richard van Dulken reported that he will hopefully be making a grant towards the football team and is liaising with Councillor Smith re this. He will also put forward that the reflective poles just before the junction of Great Yeldham Road and The Causeway are addressed. Braintree District Council are looking to plant more trees.

Councillor van Dulken stated that Braintree District Council have subcontracted work regarding car parks the North Essex Parking Partnership where he is the Braintree's representative. Councillor Neale will forward details of issues regarding the car park and the possibility of it being monitored by Braintree in order for Councillor van Dulken to follow up.

Councillor Finch apologised for not being at a meeting for a least a year and wanted to report on three items: Essex County Council Budget, The Tree Incentive and the grant scheme Essex County Council is involved with.

1. The government has been reducing the revenue support fund over the last few years and Essex County Council are looking for efficiency and savings before setting their budget in February 2020.
2. Essex County Council are looking at reducing paper wastage, plastic cup use and are changing street lights over to LED lighting to reduce costs. Verge cutting is being reduced to allow wild flowers to grow and they are also looking at moving from hot tarmac to warm tarmac to reduce CO2 emissions. Other initiatives being looked at are putting in more electric charging points, solar panels cost 20% less through Essex County Council schemes and 375,000 trees are looking to be planted over the next 5 years. Details of the climate commission will be on Essex County Council's website but this is not available as yet.
3. Through the EALC grant schemes there are grants available for up to 3 years and up to £5,000 per annum to carry out tasks around the village – this could be used to employ a handy man to do jobs such as white lines,

bollards but the jobs have to be new projects. Details of reserves and projects/jobs need to be detailed in the application.

19/201. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th November 2019 were approved and signed as correct. This was proposed by Councillor Stafford-Baker and Seconded by Councillor Chinery.

19/202. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

Councillor Page reported the telephone box door at Gainsford End is in need of repair. Councillor Neale will enquire if this can be repaired.

Clerk reported that the signage issues previously reported by the school have been logged with North Essex Parking Partnership. Along with a verge issue just past the houses on the left-hand side of Church Lane.

19/203. Actions from previous meeting:

- 19/203.1 Clerk to email grant application form to the school for A Frame and Interactive Board. Grant application forms were sent to the school for completion.
- 19/203.2 Councillor Neale to contact Braintree District Council re possible contract to monitor and maintain the car park in Park Lane – This is ongoing and will be followed up by Councillor van Dulken.
- 19/203.3 Councillor Rob Stafford-Baker to seek quotes to repair the village gate on the Great Yeldham Road – ongoing.
- 19/203.4 Councillor Stafford- Baker to seek a quote from RoSPA to assess the pavilion regarding improvements/requirements which are needed in order to use the facility as changing rooms. RoSPA do not carry out this service. However, grants are now being looked into with the EALC.
- 19/203.5 Councillor Bull to liaise with The Green Man re Christmas event refreshments and source the lights for the Christmas tree. Councillor Bull reported that on the 7th December the village market will be open from 10.30am – 12.30pm, the Church will be open from 5.45pm for people to view the decorated Christmas trees and gold coins will be available for voting for the peoples favourite and the ukulele band will be playing in the Church. At 6.30pm Father Christmas will be on the Church tower and then the Christmas tree lights will be switched on followed by the fireworks. The pub will be supplying mulled wine and sausage rolls (these will be invoiced to the parish council), The gold coins will be distributed after the voting has been counted and carols will be sung in the pub to complete the event. The Green Man will also be selling hot dogs and burgers.

19/204. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

- 19/204.1 Request for dispensation from Councillor Boyd Page to participate in discussions only regarding the planning application for outline planning at Park Lane ref no 17/01863/OUT – the dispensation request was discussed and approved. This was proposed by Councillor Collard and seconded by Councillor Smith.
- 19/204.2 Neighbourhood Plan – Councillor Page reported that a grant application has been made and Trevor Wyeth has returned to the committee. However, more volunteers are required.
- 19/204.3 Updated financial regulations and standing orders for discussion and approval. These were previously circulated to Councillors. The Standing Orders page 10, 7a – needs to state 2 councillors. The Standing Orders version 2 and the Financial Regulation's version 1 were proposed to be accepted by Councillor Collard and this was seconded by Councillor Page.
- 19/204.4 Discussion on environmental issues: what could or should Toppesfield try to do. Councillor Collard asked what environmentally related projects could the parish council look at. Suggestion were tree planting, electric charging points, renewables and refilling projects. Councillor Page will look at tree planting, Councillor Neale – charging points, Councillors Collard and Stafford Baker to look at renewables and Councillor Smith – refilling.
- 19/204.5 Procedures for obtaining quotes and tenders for works to be carried out in the parish – Clearer job specifications are required for future works and gaining quotations. Councillors Page and Stafford-Baker will oversee this.
- 19/204.6 Neighbourhood Watch – more volunteers required to become involved with this.

19/205. Correspondence Received:

- 19/205.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 19/205.2 Letter from Mr & Mrs Page regarding the outline planning application at Park Lane – this was

discussed and it was agreed further information is required from Braintree District Council before comments can be made.

- 19/205.3 Essex County Council Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way – Modification No.669 (Braintree District) Order 2019 received.
- 19/205.4 Braintree District Council – Open Space Action Plan 2020 – amendments to be submitted by 20th January 2020.
- 19/205.5 War Memorials Trust – November publication received.
- 19/206.6 CPRE – Countryside Voice and Fieldwork winter editions of publications received.
- 19/206.7 Stanstead Airport News – the November issue of this publication is available on the parish council website.
- 19/206.8 Braintree District Council – Housing Briefings dates for 2020 received.
- 19/206.9 EALC – The Appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer will take effect from 1st April 2020 where Charlene Slade will replace Joy Darby who is retiring at the end of March 2020.

Late correspondence:

Ridgewell Village Hall – offering redundant items for a donation to their village hall project. This was discussed and the parish council agreed that items offered were not required.

19/206. Financial Accounts:

- 19/206.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval - the report was received and payments approved – see Appendix A
- 19/206.2 Quotation received for play equipment for Gainsford End Playing Field – to discuss the specification and what is required or expected from the new equipment – discussed under agenda item 19/210.3.
- 19/206.3 Projects for consideration for the budget 2020/2021 – any projects need be accompanied with costings for consideration in the budget for 2020/2021.
- 19/206.4 Possible PWLB funding update. Councillor Collard reported that he is looking into costs and projects. The loan rates at present are just under 3% and repayable over 50 years.
- 19/206.5 Grant application from St Margaret's School for an A Frame re parking and an interactive board for the school hall. The grant applications were discussed and it was agreed to sponsor 2 'Kiddie shaped signs' to help improve road safety at the school up to the value of £400. The parish council also agreed to help towards the cost of an interactive screen but final quotes need to be presented along with clear figures they have managed to raise themselves towards the screen.

19/207. Highways:

- 19/207.1 School Parking – To be carried over to the next meeting.
- 19/207.2 Park Lane Car Park – return of previously removed vehicle. The owner has reported the vehicle will be removed once the place it is being put has been made safe.

19/208. Planning:

No items were discussed under this agenda point.

19/209. Toppesfield Village Hall

- 19/209.1 Update from Village Hall Management Committee – see Appendix B for the village hall report.

19/210. Playing Fields & The Dick Ruggles Pavilion

- 19/210.1 Request from St Margaret's School to use Toppesfield Playing Field for Cross Country Training and for football tournaments with other schools. This was discussed and approved by those present.
- 19/210.2 Request from Little Chestnuts Pre-school to use Toppesfield Playing Field for two events – Councillor Chinery asked if the playing field could be used for a fun run on the 14th December 2019, this was discussed and approved by the Parish Council.
The second request to use the field was for the 8th May 2021 when the pre-school are hoping to book Happy Circus to come to Toppesfield. This would be a fundraiser for the pre-school but other local business could sell refreshments etc to promote themselves. The trees leading up to the playing field would need to have a minimum height clearance – Councillor Page will look into this as permission from the Church may be required if work is necessary. Councillor Chinery also stated Church Lane would have to be clear of parked cars to allow the circus vehicles to arrive and leave.

Port-a-loos would need to be located on the field if needed and 3 signatures are required to book the circus – 2 of which would be pre-school representatives and 1 is required by the landowner – parish council. The proposal was discussed and the parish council were in agreement to Little Chestnut's event being held and run by them.

- 19/210.3 Gainsford End Playing Field Project – Councillor Stafford-Baker reported one quote has been Received however this will need to be requoted as it was agreed to used play bark rather than Black Grasslok surfacing and 2 other tenders are being pursued.
- 19/210.4 Pavilion improvements and seeking volunteers to locate funding opportunities – Councillor Stafford-Baker stated improvements need to be looked at in detail and funding located.
- 19/210.5 New bench and concrete base in the playing field – It was suggested the old bench is removed and the new bench centralised on the concrete base. Councillors Page and Stafford-Baker will carry this out.

19/211. Events

- 19/211.1 Christmas event 2019 – this was dealt with under agenda item number 19/203.5
- 19/211.2 Removal of Christmas trees from the pump and the Church – the date for the removal of the tree and subsequent clearing up has been booked for the 4th January 2019 at 10am.

19/212. Communications

- 19/212.1 Broadband update – Councillor Neale reported the project is still on track for January/February 2020.

19/213. Information exchange / Parish Surgery / Items for the next agenda

The next parish surgery will be held on 7th December 2019 at the Christmas village market.

19/214. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 9th January 2020 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

19/215. Close

The meeting closed at 10.20 pm.

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

**Councillor Neale to enquire about the repair required to the telephone box door at Gainsford End.
Councillor Rob Stafford-Baker to seek quotes to repair the village gate on the Great Yeldham Road
Councillors Collard, Page, Smith and Stafford-Baker to look at environmental projects.**

Appendix A

Accounts - 5 December 2019					
			£		£
National Savings Deposit Account:					
Balance as at 1st January 2019			<u>£2,625.57</u>		
Community Account					
	Balance as at 30 November 2019				<u>£28,025.57</u>
Subtotal:			<u>£2,625.57</u>		
All previous issued cheques cashed balance should be			<u>£2,625.57</u>		<u>£28,025.57</u>
Income Received (Included in above balance)					
Payments to be approved:					
Date of invoice			Chq No:		Unrecoverable VAT
31.10.19	Paul Chinery - verge cutting		101903	£552.00	£0.00
08.11.19	EALC - Councillor Training Course		101904	£370.68	£0.00
13.11.19	N J Simmonds - install concrete base at Toppesfield Playign Field		101905	£420.00	£0.00
15.11.19	Society of Local Council Clerks - membership renewal		101906	£109.00	£0.00
17.11.19	E.on - electric supply to the pavilion, Toppesfield Playing Field		101907	£9.01	£0.00
30.11.19	Ben Hull - Supply of Christmas Tree		101908	£100.00	£0.00
01.12.19	Toppesfield Village Hall Committee - quarterly charges & meetings up to 31st March 2020		101909	£343.50	£0.00
30.11.19	K Berry - November wages		101902	£380.94	£0.00
				<u>£2,285.13</u>	
Balance			<u>£2,625.57</u>	<u>£25,740.44</u>	
Last bank statement received up to 31st October 2019					

Appendix B

Toppesfield Village Hall Report to PC December 2019

We have had another good year and ticked off many of the jobs on our 'to do' list!

Over the Christmas period we are having more decorating done in the hall. There will be a scaffold in place for most of the holiday, it's being erected on the 19th. The beams and ceiling of the hall and stage are being painted along with the walls of the stage area and the gloss in both toilets.

We are allowing the two storage areas to dry out before we decorate them. Also, the leak in the men's toilet, which has been repaired but needs to dry completely before decorating. We have had cavity wall insulation installed using our own resources and also grant support from Braintree Council.

We are very grateful and thank all of the members of the community who have helped us by giving their expertise to a particular need or a money or material donation.

Wendy Ames and Sue Chapman agreed to be co-opted onto the committee to help us with events and out advertising/ promotion.

We are looking forward the New Year!