



# **Toppesfield Parish Council**



## **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 8.00pm**

### **23/113. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:**

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

Councillor Alan Collard  
Councillor Amanda Smith  
Councillor Jeremy Graves

#### **Also, in attendance:**

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

#### **Apologies were received from:**

Councillor Kitty Bourlet  
Councillor Trisha Roberts  
Councillor Frances Winter

### **23/114. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items**

No declarations of Members interests were made.

### **23/115. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.**

A member of the public raised an objection to planning application 23/0139/FUL due to the existing road being unable to support the required access into the new property's road which will greatly reduce to the parking and drop off required for normal week day needs.

#### **County Councillor Peter Schwier reported:**

- The micro surfacing has been completed at the Halstead, Sible Hedingham, Braintree junction.
- Work on repairs to the gulley's around the District is being carried out.
- Work to the bridge at the White Hart, Great Yeldham looks like it will be completed by the end of the summer.
- Ride London was successful in the County and Essex County Council (ECC) have committed to another 3 years for the event to take place.
- ECC have undergone an Ofsted inspection for their Child Services and are waiting for the report with their findings.
- National Grid have an open consultation for the Norwich to Tilbury project. This is open for the public to submit their comments before it closes on 21.08.23. The following link will take you to their website: [Public consultation and programme | National Grid ET](#)
- The Locality Grant is available until February 2024 – enquires to be made directly to Peter Schwier.

Councillor Collard asked about community energy projects and Councillor Schwier provided a contact name at ECC regarding energy projects.

Councillor van Dulken reported:

- Dart 3 – Cllr van Dulken provided some leaflets to promote the service. The service is underused at present.
- Braintree District Council (BDC) are rolling out their food waste recycling project to encourage more food waste to be recycled as 26% of waste for landfill is food waste.
- Wethersfield Asylum Centre – the judicial review is taking place on the 12<sup>th</sup> /13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and reported no one will be moving in prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> July.
- There is no update on the enforcement action for the Fishing Lakes on Great Yeldham Road.
- At the cabinet meeting to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> July will include the Rural England Prosperity Fund and a decision on whether or not to charge for the garden waste collection service will be made.
- Finchingfield and Wethersfield have made a joint neighbourhood plan application.
- Cllr van Dulken is a BDC representative on the Stansted Airport group. A plan to build a new arrivals terminal has been shelved but they will extend it towards to the runway.

### **23/116. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting**

It was proposed by Cllr Collard and seconded by Cllr Smith that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

### **23/117. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only.**

There were no matters arising.

### **23/118. Co-option of councillors**

There has been some interest shown in the vacant position but no response uptake at present.

### **23/119. Actions from previous meeting:**

- 23/119.1 Meeting to be arranged between the Village Hall, Community shop and the parish council regarding general working practices. Cllr Collard has contacted both groups and a meeting will be arranged for September.
- 23/119.2 Clerk to compile a list of what improvements could be made to the office space. A list was drawn up and costs have been asked for to be presented at the next meeting.
- 23/119.3 Cllr Winter to progress the repair of the basketball hoop backboard. The repairs have been completed and the backboard reinstated.

### **23/120. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:**

- 23/120.1 Neighbourhood Plan update – Cllr Collard reported that further sections have been completed and a draft should be available by the end on July.
- 23/120.2 Joint Neighbourhood Plan - Cllr Collard has contacted Wethersfield PC re this but not received a response as yet.
- 23/120.3 Update on proposed village Charity – Cllr Collard reported there has been no further progress at present.
- 23/120.4 Wethersfield Airfield and Asylum centre update - Cllr Roberts provided an update please see Appendix A.
- 23/120.5 ROSPA reports and actions need to be taken. Following the inspections the reports have been received. It was agreed to identify the works needed and seek costings for repairs. It was also agreed the Cllr's Smith and Bourlet would investigate what people would like at the play area and then draw up a plan along with costs.
- 23/120.6 Short Course programme – a 2-hour training session, is available from the EALC to give councillors an overview of various council matters. Details to be circulated.

### **23/121. Correspondence Received:**

- 23/121.1 EALC Legal & County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 23/121.2 Essex Highways - Public consultation for the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy. The consultation is open until Sunday 30 July 2023. The quickest and easiest way for people to tell us what they think is by completing our short [online consultation survey](#). More information about the proposals can be found in our public consultation brochure, which is available via the online survey page or our webpage at: [www.essexhighways.org/ev-strategy](http://www.essexhighways.org/ev-strategy).

23/121.3 Essex Ecology – information about services they offer have been received.

An offer has been made from a local police officer to run a session on the most common scams

### **23/122. Financial Accounts:**

23/122.1 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 Smith seconded this. All payments were approved. See Appendix B for details.

23/122.2 Proposal to purchase a new printer for the parish office - various printers and costs were presented to the parish council. It was proposed by Cllr Graves and seconded by Cllr Smith a new printer up to the value of £400 could be purchased. Clerk to make the purchase.

### **23/123. Highways:**

23/123.1 Park Lane Car Park – before part of the car park can be considered for selling consultation with Braintree District Council is required due to a clause on the original sale of the land to the parish council.

23/123.2 Potential improvement project for the Toppesfield Pump area. A proposal for improving the area around the village pump was discussed and it was agreed to look into this in more detail and what would be acceptable to highways. Clerk to contact Cllr Schwier to find out who is the appropriate person in Highways to liaise with regarding the project.

### **23/124. Planning:**

<b>Application No:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Action</b>
23/01399/FUL	Demolition of former grain store and erection of 2 No. 3 bedroom cottages	Church Farm Barn Church Lane Toppesfield CO9 4DR	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 10 July 2023
23/01416/HH	Erection of 3 storey side extension	19 Stambourne Road Toppesfield CO9 4DG	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 17 July 2023
23/01434/FUL	Construction of agricultural building	Land East Of Meads Farm House Great Yeldham Road Toppesfield CO9 4LS	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 17 July 2023
23/01572/HH	Demolition of existing single storey outbuilding and replacement with 1.5 storey outbuilding to include guest accommodation	Oak House Robinhood End Toppesfield CO9 4NN	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 25 July 2023

The above applications were discussed and recommendations are as follows:

Planning application 23/01399/FUL – Objection to this application as there is not sufficient onsite parking, road safety – the entrance is opposite the school and on an increasingly busy road, other dwellings on the grounds have already raised concerns over parking which this application will add to.

Planning application 23/01416/HH – The parish council fully support this application.

Planning application 23/01434/FUL – The parish council are happy to support this application subject to it being used for agricultural purposes only.

Planning application 23/01572/HH – No objections were raised to this application.

### **23/125. Communications:**

23/125.1 Representatives for WASC and BALC to be appointed – Cllr Collard remains as a named representative for WASC and minutes are received from the meetings.

BALC – no volunteers to be the representative were forthcoming at the meeting. Cllr Winter to be ask

if she would take on this role.

23/125.2 Facebook administrator to be appointed – hold over to the next meeting and seek volunteers for this role.

**23/126. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda**

No items were discussed under this heading.

**23/127. Date of the next meeting:**

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

**23/128. Close**

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.15pm

Signed:

Dated:

**Action Summary:**

- **Clerk to seek costing for potential improvements to the parish office space.**
- **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.**

## Appendix A

The latest information on the airbase is that BDC lost their appeal but their appeal has left open the definition of “national emergency” which is interesting as it leaves the possible definition of this to a judicial review judge to look at. The application for a JD to be heard will be before the high court on July 12/13. This is to rule if there is a case for a JD. If the judge rules that there is a case, then a date will be set for the JD. Someone from the Scampton airbase group has joined the JD action.

Three extraordinary truck loads – huge portacabins – had to turn back after being parked for several hours in Sible Hedingham near the fire station. The route to the base, going up the hill past the church and turning left towards Wethersfield – had been approved by the HO. However, Essex Police were apparently unaware of the planned convoy. The new Community Police Officer “Steve” tried to clear parked cars from the pinch point near the bus depot but was unsuccessful as the cars were legally parked and owners declined to move them.

These portacabins were to be for staff and a medical centre. News yesterday was that the HO has decided calls to 111 can replace the medical centre in the short term!

Work continues at the base – repairs - or attempted repairs – to the sewage system, fencing etc. Tree roots are known to have grown into the pipes outside the base, and there have been several incidents of sewage leaks on farming land in the past. The MoJ had noted a long time ago that a new sewage works would be required. It seems that someone has read our report on contamination as the HO now has their own environmental contractor on the base. In the meantime, portaloos have been delivered to the base.

The Fields Association has a quiz and auction on Friday July 7<sup>th</sup> at Wethersfield village hall. There are some super lots for the auction!

A protest is planned for 12 noon at the entrance to the base on July 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Appendix B

Accounts -6th July 2023				
			£	
<b>Community Account</b>				
	Closing Balance as at 3rd July 2023		£39,233.48	
	All previous payments issued balance should be		<u>£39,243.48</u>	
	Income Received Included in the balance figure of 06.06.23		£0.00	
			<u>£0.00</u>	
	Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance figure on the 06.06.23)			
03.07.23	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		£10.00	
			<u>£10.00</u>	
	Other payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance figure on 04.07.23)			
			<u>£0.00</u>	
				Unrecoverable VAT
<b>Payments to be approved:</b>				
<b>Date of invoice</b>		<b>Chq No:</b>		
06.04.23	St Margarets Cof E School - grant request	By Bacs	£1,500.00	£0.00
01.07.23	Donation to WASC as set out in the budget	By Bacs	£500.00	£0.00
08.06.23	Braintree District Council - Grounds Maintenance 2023/24	By Bacs	£1,416.00	£0.00
01.06.23	RCCE - Membership Renewal	By Bacs	£52.80	£0.00
various	Expenses - stationery and flowers	By Bacs	£34.50	£0.00
06.07.23	Paul Clark Printing - Newsletter - July/August	By Bacs	£300.00	£0.00
06.07.23	D Winter - to remove, repair and re-install the basketball hoop/backboard	By Bacs	£242.87	£0.00
01.06.23	K Berry - June salary	By Bacs	£502.92	£0.00
			<u>£4,549.09</u>	
			£34,684.39	