



# Toppesfield Parish Council



## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Via Zoom at 7.30pm

### 21/1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

#### The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard – Chair  
Councillor Chris Neale – Vice chair  
Councillor Amanda Smith  
Councillor Andrea Chinery  
Councillor Boyd Page

Also, in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken  
Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

No Apologies were received.

### 21/2. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

No declarations of Members interests were made.

### 21/3. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported that three surgeries including Sible Hedingham are hoping to start inviting people for their covid inoculations in the coming week. Also Braintree District Council are distributing tests mainly for the 11 – 18 year olds from the office at Causeway House – this is a collection service only. Councillor van Dulken also reminded the parish council that the Open Space Action Plan submissions need to be submitted by the end of January.

Councillor van Dulken enquired if the community businesses are getting all the grants they are entitled to and stated that the covid infection rate is extraordinarily high at present. He also stated the Braintree District Council on the operations side is still operating whereas Rochford is almost closed down due to infections and staff self-isolating.

### 21/4. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

Councillor Page proposed the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 were signed as a true record of the meeting this was seconded by Councillor Chinery.

### 21/5. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

Councillor Page reported that the Toppesfield & Gainsford End Response Group has started up again following the latest lockdown announcement. A piece will be published in the newsletter to remind people of the group and the relevant telephone numbers. The telephone numbers will also be displayed on the A-board by the Pumhouse and leaflets are being delivered to the most vulnerable ahead of the newsletter. Councillor and Gill Page will monitor the phone at first. Councillor Collard offered to take the phone for a stint next and a third couple to man the phones will be sought to spread the responsibilities. Younger volunteers for the 'running around' (i.e. shopping) may be required.

Councillor co-option - two people who previously had shown interest in joining the parish council have decided not to at this time.

### 21/6. Actions from previous meeting:

21/6.1 Councillor Smith to report the progress with County Broadband/contractors regarding works along The Causeway. Councillor Smith stated there has been no response from County Broadband and the

work is beginning to break up in places. Councillor Smith and Clerk to follow up with the main contractors Telec.

- 21/6.2 Clerk to contact the Berwick Hall Wood landowner re permissions for shooting. Councillor Collard has been in contact with the landowner and he has only given permission to one person to shoot in the woods and refused several others. He has also given permission for some fallen trees to be cleared near the spot used by Forest School. He is unhappy with the prospect of the road being used as a general thoroughfare and will be asking the contractors to keep the barriers more frequently closed. He is also going to install CCTV around the wood as well as signage.
- 21/6.3 Clerk to follow up on the request to close the National Savings Account – the account is now closed and the money transferred into parish council Barclays account.

### **21/7. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:**

- 21/7.1 Neighbourhood Plan Update – Councillor Page stated there is no further progress to report at this stage. An article from the chair of the Neighbourhood Plan group is in the January edition of the parish newsletter. A public event is ideally required to inform parishioners of the progress made and ideas.
- 21/7.2 Updates from Project Working Group and Environment working group – Councillor Collard reported that the Environment group have planted the 5 Oak trees in Harrow Hill and along the footpath from Gainsford End to the fishing lake. Braintree District Council are funding 25 – 30 bare root trees and these should be available in the next few weeks – an article about this is in the January newsletter.

There is a climate crisis conference on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January, via Zoom, is being held by EALC if anyone from the council wishes to attend.

Braintree District Council have declared a Climate Emergency – everyone has different abilities to influence the climate. Braintree is looking at solar panels for their buildings, Essex County Council – Highways, do you build more? And at a parish level we are limited as to what we can do on a day-to-day basis on purchasing. It was suggested that maybe the parish council could look at solar panels and electric charging points. Braintree District Council have committed a budget £500,000 to help with the climate issues and are committed to purchasing electric cars to help achieve their targets.

The project working group has not made any progress since last month.

### **21/8. Correspondence Received:**

- 21/8.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 21/8.2 Braintree District Council – Open Spaces action plan 2021. Request for amendments to be made to the plan. These were discussed and clerk to respond.
- 21/8.3 Census Engagement Manager, North Essex Office for National Statistics – Census 2021 request to promote participation received. The parish council agreed to help promote this once materials received.
- 21/8.4 Essex Highways - Essex-wide Bus Shelter Project Change to timescales and ownership of bus shelters. All councillors to review the information supplied.
- 21/8.5 Braintree District Council – Local Plan Section 1 update circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. The receipt of the information is noted.

### **21/9. Financial Accounts:**

- 21/9.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received. Councillor Collard proposed this was approved and Councillor Neale seconded this. See Appendix A.
- 21/9.2 Final Precept and budget figures for 2021/2022. It was agreed by all present the increase in the budget of £240 for the year 2021/2022 be added to the precept raising it to £17493.00.

### **21/10. Highways:**

- 21/10.1 Possible replacement of the village signs in Stambourne Road - One has been knocked down and on inspection it shows that both are rotting and need replacing. Councillor Page reported that following the sign on Stambourne Road being knocked down the one opposite was inspected and it too was found to be rotting. The gates on Great Yeldham Road had previously been agreed for replacement so Councillor Page proposed that both sets of gates are replaced at once and the materials for both are

purchased at the same time to reduce costs. This was agreed by all present. There will not be any labour costs as this is being given for free. The cost of materials is approximately £500.00. It was agreed by those present for Councillor Page to progress this project.

21/10.2 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 – Section 14(1) - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Tilbury Road, Great Yeldham. This link <https://one.network/?tm=119511236> shows details of the intended closure of Tilbury Road, due to commence on 13th January 2021 for 3 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Anglian Water undertakes new connection.

21/10.3 Park Lane Car Park – quotes and further information regarding the car park. Councillor Page suggested the best way forward is to halve the car park and fence it off. Quotes for different surfaces were obtained. These included porous asphalt/tarmac, non-porous asphalt/tarmac, block paving or concrete and these ranged from £3100 to £10268 plus vat. It was suggested road planings are used – a quote will be sought for this. The surface type would need to be agreed before taking the project further.

An electric car charging point was suggested and if so, considerations would be if it was left open for public use or if it would be chargeable and if so, the infrastructure would need to be put in place for this.

## 21/11. Planning:

<b>Application No:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Action</b>
20/01837/HH	Conversion of detached garage to provide ancillary accommodation, including a revised roof profile from monopitched to double pitched.	1 Aden Cottages Stambourne Road Toppesfield CO9 4NB	Comments to Braintree District Council by  4th January 2021. Extension requested
20/00433/TPOCON	Notice of intent to carry out work to trees in a Conservation Area - Twisted Willow (T1) Fell tree and grind stump, Acer (T2) No work and Hawthorn (T3) Fell tree and grind stump	16 The Street Toppesfield Essex CO9 4DJ	Comments to Braintree District Council by  8th January 2021
20/02109/FUL	Retention of Fishery Manager's Temporary Dwelling and fish hatchery.	Fishing Lakes, Great Yeldham Hall, Toppesfield Road	Comments to Braintree District Council by  20th January 2021

Application no 20/01837/HH was discussed - no objections were raised, and the parish council would support the application.

Application no 20/00433/TPOCON was discussed and no objections were raised.

Application no 20/02109/FUL – the Chairman invited District Councillor Richard van Dulken to give an overview of the application as he has a lot of knowledge regarding the this and previous applications for the Fishing Lakes. The application was then discussed, and concerns raised included: the site is visually unattractive at present, the mobile home units do not suit their surroundings, the embankment is higher than it was originally intended, the polytunnels are of sizable construction, and it is out of place for a wildlife haven. A vote was taken, and the majority vote was against the application. Councillor Page was in support of the application and he requested his support was noted in the minutes.

## 21/12. Playing Fields & The Dick Ruggles Pavilion

Councillor Page confirmed he has repaired the rocker/springer with new grips and hung the new goal nets. Councillor Smith reported that she will be progressing her football training once able.

### 21/13. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

Councillor Chinery asked if the parish council could purchase some litter pickers which could be available for parishioners to use on their walks around the parish. Clerk to look at cost for the next meeting.

### 21/14. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 7.30pm – this will be held virtually or at Toppesfield Village Hall depending on government advice at the time.

### 21/15. Close

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed:

Dated:

### Action Summary:

**Councillor Smith and the clerk to follow up with Telec as no response from County Broadband has been received regarding works along The Causeway.  
Clerk to seek prices for litter pickers.**

## Appendix A

Accounts - 7 January 2021		£	£	
National Savings Deposit Account:				
Balance as at 1st January 2020		£2,646.58		
Community Account				
Balance as at 31 December 2020			£30,398.91	
Subtotal:		£2,646.58		
All previous issued cheques cashed balance should be		£2,646.58	£27,814.34	
Income Received				
03.12.20	Interest capitalisation	£19.03		
Monies out				
03.12.20	Closure of account payment	£2,665.61		
Account Balance		£0.00		
Income Received (included in the balance figure of 31 December 2020)				
03.12.20	Closure of account payment from National Savings		£2,665.61	
05.12.20	Mr & Mrs Stafford-Baker - rental payment		£10.00	
01.12.20	UK Power Networks		£76.10	
			£2,751.71	
Direct Debits included in balance figure of 30.11.20				
01.12.20	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		£10.00	£0.00
			Balance	£10.00
Payments approved at prior meetings and paid :				
05.12.20	Plants That Grow - Christmas Tree		£250.00	£0.00
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice		Chq No:		Unrecoverable VAT
18.11.20	Toppesfield Village Hall Committee - Quartely charges for April - Dec 2020 less prepaid hire charges for NHP event	By Bacs	£444.00	£0.00
07.01.20	Paul Clark Printing - January Newsletter	By Bacs	£180.00	£0.00
31.12.20	K Berry - December Wages	By Bacs	£380.94	£0.00
			£1,004.94	
			£29,301.11	