



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 8th August 2024 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

24/115. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Paula Edwards-Holmes – Chaired the meeting
Councillor Frances Winter
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Jane Daines
Councillor Chris Neale

Also, in attendance:

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

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Kitty Bourlet
Councillor Jeremy Graves
County Councillor Peter Schwier

24/116. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items

Councillor Edwards-Holmes declared an interest in agenda item 24.124.1 and Councillor Neale declared an interest in agenda item 24/122.2.

24/117. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

A parishioner raised concerns about the speed and size of traffic through the village and asked if either a 20mph speed limit could be put in place or flashing speed signs be installed to slow the traffic down. It was asked if the 20mph could stretch from Cust Hall all the way through Toppesfield.

A further suggestion was to have a community speed watch team visit or police speed traps.

The chair stated that the parish council would find out what is involved to progress any of these schemes.

A local contractor asked if residents could give details of speeding farm vehicles, i.e. description of vehicle, registration, photograph and details of time/location then drivers can be identified and his drivers are reminded each year to watch their speed. He is only one of 9 contractors whose vehicles use the village. It was also mentioned that farm traffic is allowed along Park Lane as the sign is not a legal one.

Overhanging hedges/vegetation on the roads is an issue for all vehicles and can cause more straw to be discarded on the roads. Clearance heights are specified as 5.2m over the highway, 2.5m over the footway and 0.5m clear from the edge of the carriageway.

An offer has been made to the parish council by a local contractor that if anyone has overhanging hedges/vegetation he would be willing to help clear the overhangs.

It was noted that several places in the village have overhanging hedges/vegetation, and the parish council will contact residents regarding areas that could be an issue.

The P3 representative, Paul Thompson stated that all footpaths in the parish need to be categorised and numbers located so each one can be logged. Some paths need clearing/re-instating.

Clerk to obtain the definitive map from the parish office and any other footpath information and pass it on. Cllr Neale and Paul Thompson see if a local map can be drawn up and costs involved and report findings back to the parish council.

It was stated that the edge field paths are the responsibility of Highways to maintain, and the cross-field paths are the responsibility of the landowner.

It was reported that the weekly Thursday walking group is doing well, and new members are welcomed.

Potholes issues were raised and in particular Gainsford End Road. Cllr Neale to obtain the What3words locations and report to Highways/Cllr Schwier. Clerk to contact Gt Yeldham parish council about the state of Toppesfield Road just before you come into the residential area and ask for this to be repaired to avoid the school bus getting stuck again this year.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported:

- Angela Rayner wants to make changes to the planning process, but this should not affect Toppesfield greatly.
- Housing targets for each authority have been increased. Braintree's has increased to 1098 per year. Also, there is a push forward for larger schemes i.e. solar farms, pylons and inland wind farms.
- The Councillors Community Grant fund is open for applications.
- He is now on the Essex Pension Fund advisory board.

24/118. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

Cllr Winter proposed the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18th July 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting and Cllr Smith seconded this.

24/119. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only.

There were no matters arising.

24/120. Actions from previous meeting:

24/120.1 Cllr Bourlet to liaise with Alan Collard regarding progress made for funding for digitalising historic photographs/documents. No update available – carry over to next meeting.

24/120.2 Cllrs Bourlet, Winter to arrange and meet with a third representatives regarding possibilities for the playing field. This has not yet been arranged.

24/120.3 Cllr Bourlet to research funding for the playing field project. No update available – carry over to next meeting.

24/120.4 Cllr Bourlet to report back to the playing field group with response from the Cricket Club representative regarding boundaries for the cricket pitch. Cllr Winter confirmed a conversation has taken place but the outcome was not known. Cllr Bourlet to confirm outcome.

24/120.5 Cllr Graves to give update on the installation of the dog poop bag dispensers locations. A volunteer has stated they will instal the dog poop dispensers.

24.120.6 Cllr Graves to write to contractor for playing field maintenance. No update available.

24/120.7 Cllr Graves to look at options for the car park in Park Lane. No update available – carry over to next meeting.

24.120.8 Clerk to see clarification of memorial bench size and if a contractor has been engaged for installing the base and if so when is this planned for. The parishioner would still like to progress this but not at the moment. They will contact the PC when the family feel able to do so.

24/121. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

24/121.1 Neighbourhood Plan update - no update available.

24/121.2 Wethersfield Airfield and Asylum centre update - information is circulated to councillors when it is received and WASC meeting minutes are available on the parish council website.

24/121.3 Waste Collection Vehicle to attend the village on 21 September 2024. This has been booked and will be in attendance at the phone box in Gainsford End from 10am to 10.50am and from 11am to 1pm at the Pump in Toppesfield.

24/121.4 2 Hour Short Course training – Councillors to confirm preferred modules and a date in October to be booked with EALC.

24/121.5 Proposal to adopt updated social media Policy – differences between the existing and updated policy to be highlighted and circulated for comments.

24/121.6 Cllr Graves – update on Gainsford End sign. No update available – carry over to next meeting.

24/121.7 Tree planting project – hold over to next meeting. Locations and availability of trees for planting to be sought.

24/122. Correspondence Received:

24/122.1 EALC Legal & County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.

24/122.2 Braintree District Council Call for Sites – comments on the three proposed sites for consideration at the September Local Plan Sub-Committee meetings to be returned to BDC by 16th August 2024.

The sites that have been submitted to BDC were discussed. Although all sites are outside the village Envelopes, the parish council were in support of sites TOPP2294 and TOPP2295 in Park Lane. The parish council was not in support of TOPP2296 on Stambourne Road.

24/123. Financial Accounts:

24/123.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received, Cllr Edwards-Holmes proposed the payments were approved and Cllr Smith seconded this.

24/124 Highways:

24/124.1 Park Lane Car Park – update on progression of potential sale and other options. No update available – carry over to next meeting.

24/124.2 Tree Planting – consideration of locations and project planning – discussed under 24/121.7.

24/124.3 Speed of traffic through the village – requests for restrictions i.e. 20mph limit, flashing speed signs. This was discussed during the open session and enquires to be made on restrictions and signs.

24/124.4 Footpaths - maintenance required and clearer marking required on some footpaths. This was discussed during the open session.

24/125. Communications:

No items were discussed under this heading.

24/126. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

Items for the next agenda: Christmas event.

24/127. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 5th September 2024 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

24/128. Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 9pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

- Clerk to enquire with Essex County Council about the process for gaining a 20mph speed limit and/or flashing speed signs.
- Clerk to enquire about community speed watch / police speed traps.
- Cllr Neale to contact Cllr Schwier re potholes along Gainsford End Road.
- Clerk to contact Gt Yeldham Parish Council re the condition of the Toppesfield Road before the residential area.
- Cllr Bourlet to liaise with Alan Collard regarding progress made for funding for digitalising historic photographs/documents.
- Cllrs Bourlet, Winter to arrange and meet with a third representatives regarding possibilities for the playing field.
- Cllr Bourlet to research funding for the playing field project.
- Cllr Bourlet to report back to the playing field group with response from the Cricket Club representative regarding boundaries for the cricket pitch.
- Cllr Graves to write to contractor for playing field maintenance.
- Cllr Graves to look at options for the car park in Park Lane.

Appendix A

Accounts - 8th August 2024				
			£	
Community Account				
	Closing Balance as at 7th August 2024		34,454.51	
	All previous payments issued balance should be		<u>£34,478.31</u>	
Income Received				
			<u>£0.00</u>	
Direct Debits	Included in the balance figure of 7th August 2024			
01.07.24	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		£10.00	
07.08.24	Vodaphone Contract		£13.80	
			<u>£23.80</u>	
				Unrecoverable VAT
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice		Chq No:		
03.08.24	Toppesfield Village Hall - quarterly rent and hall hire	By Bacs	£307.50	£0.00
01.08.24	HMRC - Tax on July salary	By Bacs	£30.60	£0.00
01.08.24	K Berry - July salary	By Bacs	£712.35	£0.00
			<u>£1,050.45</u>	
			£33,404.06	