



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 6th May 2021 Via Google Meet at 7.30pm

21/71. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2021-2022

Councillor Alan Collard was elected as Chair for 2021-2022 and he accepted the position for the coming year. Councillor Chris Neale was elected as vice-chair for 2021-2022 and he accepted the position.

21/72. 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
Councillor Daisy Watson
Councillor Gemma Mackman

Also, in attendance:

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

Apologies were received from:

County Councillor David Finch

21/73. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

It was noted that Councillors Collard and Neale's partners are involved with the Toppesfield Mum's group who have made a grant request to the parish council.

21/74. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported:

- The planning application for the Fishing Lakes in Great Yeldham was been withdrawn by the applicants.
- Leisure centres are now open.
- On the 19th April at Braintree's council meeting a new chair was appointed, their constitution has been updated and he has been elected onto the Essex Waste Partnership and the North Essex Parking Partnership committees.
- £407,000 in financial support has been available by Essex County Council for businesses impacted by covid-19. Braintree District Council are assisting with the distribution of this.
- David Finch is retiring and steps down on the 11 May 2021.

21/75. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 1st April 2021 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting this was proposed by Councillor Chinery and seconded by Councillor Page.

21/76. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

Councillor Page asked if there had been any response from Anglian Water regarding the access road by the village hall. No response has been received – clerk to follow this up.

21/77. Actions from previous meeting:

- 21.77.1 Councillors Watson and Mackman to draft ideas for a policy on Environment and Ecology for the parish council – it was reported that discussions are taking place and potential projects may include: the recycling of ‘scrunchy’ plastic waste and coffee pods, extending the recycling provision in the village and have a dedicated collection point for tetrapaks. It was agreed that this will be taken to the Environment and Ecology group for further discussion and to formalize the groups objectives. It was agreed this issue could be discussed at a Network 5 meeting and all parishes to be involved. A list of local recycling points is needed and what is available at each site.
- 21.77.2 Councillor Collard circulated an initial report to all councillors prior to the meeting on the possible creation of a village charity/community fund. It was stated that the Charity Commission have model constitutions that could be of use. Discussions were held and it was agreed to progress this – Councillors Page, Neale and Chinery will help Councillor Collard in progressing this.
- 21.77.3 Clerk to check date availability and for publicity material for Braintree District Council Amenity Vehicle Hire service – dates requested but not available at present. Clerk to follow up. It was agreed in principal to use this service for 3 hours at a cost of £285.00 – one hour for Gainsford End and two in Toppesfield.
- 21.77.4 Clerk to contact Braintree District Council with regards to a dog waste bin along Church Lane. Email sent but no response yet. Clerk to follow up.
- 21.77.5 Clerk to contact Essex County Council regarding the road surface along Church Lane. An email has been sent but no response yet.
- A response from Essex County Council has been received regarding Mallows Lane – “We can advise the Public Rights of Way Team are aware of this issue and an inspection of the byway was made in February 2021, another inspection will also be made soon. This byway is on the list for consideration for surface treatment – road planings during the Summer months – once the site is re-inspected and updated photos are taken then the site will be assessed against others on the list for consideration (we do not have the resources to repair all sites on the list, therefore, only the most damaged sites can be taken forward for treatment) which will determine the priority scoring. If this site meets the scoring threshold, then surfacing works will be carried out in the Summertime.”

21/78. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

- 21/78.1 Neighbourhood Plan Update and drop-in meeting/display – Councillor Page reported a zoom meeting has been arranged for the 19th May 2021 at 7pm with Jan Stobart and the Neighbourhood Plan Group to discuss the public session on 31st July 2021. Councillors were encouraged to attend.

21/78.2 Updates from

- Project Working Group including update and discussion about Green Man barn (ACo):
 - The written Report to Council was circulated prior to the meeting and discussed in detail.

Councillor Page proposed:

1. that the parish council purchases the Green Man Barn for the sum of £55,000;
2. that the parish council seeks the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of £85,000 over the borrowing term of 50 years for the purpose of purchasing the Green Man barn and carrying out refurbishment and renovation works resulting in a new parish office and multi-use room, including all utilities.

The proposals were seconded by Councillor Smith and agreed by all present.

- It was RESOLVED to purchase the Green Man Barn for the sum of £55,000.
- It was RESOLVED to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of £85,000 over the borrowing term of 50 years for the purpose of purchasing the Green Man barn and carrying out refurbishment and renovation works resulting in a new parish office and multi-use room, including all utilities. The annual loan repayments will come to around £3,000.
It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

- Environment working group – Councillors Watson and Mackman to liaise with the environment working group on issues raised under agenda item 21.77.1

21/79. Correspondence Received:

- 21/79.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 21/79.2 Community engagement opportunity- Braintree Community Policing Team - Essex Police and Braintree District Council are looking for venues to arrange community engagement drop in events where people can come and talk to members of Braintree District Council and the Police about any concerns they may have about coming out of lockdown or any other local issues.
- 21/79.3 CPRE- Countryside Voice and Fieldwork Spring Editions received – these publications were passed to Councillor Chinery.
- 21/79.4 Stop Stansted Expansion – update received which includes their AGM agenda – this has been placed on the parish website for information. Please note it is addressed to Dear Supporter, however the parish council as a body has not registered its support.
- 21/79.5 Essex County Council – response received regarding signage and safety audit at Cust Hall Bridge. The response from Essex County Council was “We can advise there are no current plans to install signage at this point in time, however the Structures Team have requested a Stage 3 Road Safety Audit be undertaken here now that the main works are complete. Signage may be included in any recommendations made in the report undertaken by Road Safety Engineering.”

Late correspondence:

A request has been made to make the Toppesfield & Gainsford End Community Facebook page more accessible to post on. Councillor Neale will post on the Facebook page how to put posts on.

A complaint has been received regarding the parking along The Causeway just after the junction with Great Yeldham Road as you enter the village from Gainsford End. Vehicles are parked on both sides of the road and that it is hazardous as it obscures the view for vehicles coming out the Toppesfield. This was discussed and noted.

21/80. Financial Accounts:

- 21/80.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval - The report was received. Councillor Page proposed this was approved and Councillor Neale seconded this. See Appendix A.
- 21/80.2 Grant application received for consideration from Toppesfield and Gainsford End Allotment Society for help towards the cost of the water charges for the allotments. This application was discussed at length and it was agreed not to support the application at this time. It is felt the water supply is a basic and continuing provision to plot holders and therefore paid out of plot fees. The allotment group were unable to supply the accounts at this time and the grant system is in place for funding events and projects and not running costs.
- 21/80.3 Grant application received for consideration from Toppesfield Cricket Club for help towards installing an artificial cricket wicket that will be used for practice/training purposes. The application was discussed - the request for £2000 would not be possible as this is the entire Parish Council grant budget. It was noted that the cricket club has not always seemed welcoming, but it was felt this has recently changed. The field is a shared space by all users, and no one has an automatic right to it. Further discussions were held and Councillor Collard proposed a grant of £500 was made, this was seconded by Councillor Mackman and agreed by all present.
- 21/80.4 Grant application received for consideration from Lynn Collard to support a 'Welcome to the village' coffee morning on 26 June for all who have moved to the village over the past 18 months. This application was discussed and the parish council agreed to support this grant application for £40.00.

Suggestions for items to be included in a welcome pack for new residents were asked for so these can be discussed at the June parish council meeting.

21/81. Highways:

- 21/81.1 Request for a dog waste bin along Harrow Hill – a request has been made to Braintree District Council to see if they can supply a dog waste bin.
- 21/81.2 Park Lane Car Park – update and car park project. Councillor Page reported the posts now have

reflectors on them, cars are still using the space responsibly and the area is looking tidy. The surface of the carpark still needs to be addressed and what happens to the land behind the posts is still to be determined. Rights of way for number 7 Park Lane also need to be confirmed.

21/81.3 Village Road Name signs - require attention, proposal to make an inventory of them and requirements to smarten them up. Councillor Page to do an inventory of all road signs in the parish and paint the street name sign in Park Lane. It was suggested an adopt a sign article be placed in the July newsletter.

21/82. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
21/00997/TPOCON	Notice of intent to carry out works to tree in a Conservation Area - Reduce Conifer by 4 meters	4 The Street, Toppesfield CO9 4DJ	Comments to Braintree District Council by 5th May 2021 Extension requested
21/01060/LBC	Installation of broadband cable.	Olivers Farm Great Yeldham Road Toppesfield CO9 4LS	Comments to Braintree District Council by 14th May 2021
21/01180/HH	Proposed Rear extension at ground floor level with insertion of 2no. Dormers at first floor level to the front elevation, and all associated works.	2 The Street Toppesfield CO9 4DJ	Comments to Braintree District Council by 25th May 2021

The above applications were discussed:

Application number 21/00997/TPOCON – no objections were raised to this application.

Application number 21/01060/LBC – no objections were raised to this application.

Application number 21/01180/HH – no objections were raised and the parish council support this application.

21/83. Communications:

Councillor Neale to follow up with open reach regarding the current position on the broadband project.

21/84. Playing Fields & The Dick Ruggles Pavilion

21/84.1 Consideration for new play equipment in the park. Councillor Page reported that the park is used by a lot of people especially after school and there have been requests for further play equipment for the children.

This was discussed and agreed the equipment age range needs to be extended to include teenagers. Quotes to be sought for items such as Jungle bars/chin up bars, climbing frame/assault course equipment. Councillors Page and Smith to seek quotes.

Councillor Page to follow up on the issues with the ditch at the bottom corner of the playing field.

21/85. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

Clerk to follow up with Great Yeldham Parish council and the setting of the next Network 5 meeting.

Item for the next meeting agenda – gather opinions from residents with regards to priorities, preferences and needs to ensure the parish council are representing the community in future plans. This could be in the form of a bi-annual survey either by email or paper form.

21/86. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 3rd June 2021 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

21/87. Close

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

Clerk to follow up with Anglian Water regarding the access road by the village hall.

Councillors Watson and Mackman to formalise objectives/ policy document with the Environment and Ecology group and to start compiling a list of local recycling points and the offerings each point has.

Councillor Collard to progress the possibility of setting up a charity/fund for the benefit of the parish.

Clerk to follow up on date availability and for publicity material for Braintree District Council Amenity Vehicle Hire service.

Clerk to follow up with Braintree District Council regards to a dog waste bin along Church Lane and Harrow Hill.

All Councillor - Suggestions for items to be included in a welcome pack for new residents to be brought to the June meeting.

Councillor Page and Smith to seek quotes for play equipment for Toppesfield Playing Field.

Appendix A

Accounts - 6 May 2021				
			£	
Community Account				
	Balance as at 30 April 2021		£35,356.03	
All previous issued cheques cashed balance should be			<u>£26,370.03</u>	
Income Received				
29.04.21	BDC -1st Instalment - Precept		£8,747.00	
29.04.21	BDC - Collection Fund - Distribution of Surplus		£240.00	
			<u>£8,987.00</u>	
Direct Debits included in balance figure of 30.04.21				
01.04.21	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		£1.00	£0.00
			<u>£1.00</u>	
			£0.00	
				Unrecoverable VAT
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice		Chq No:		
01.04.21	Essex Association of Local Councils - Affiliaton Fees EALC/NALC 2021/22	By Bacs	£173.75	
07.04.21	BirkettLong - costs relating to Park Lane Car Park	By Bacs	£264.00	
06.05.21	Paul Clark Printing - May Newsletter	By Bacs	£250.00	
30.04.21	K Berry - April Wages	By Bacs	£380.94	£0.00
			<u>£1,068.69</u>	
			<u>£34,287.34</u>	