



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 4th August 2022 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

22/114. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Chris Neale – Chair
Councillor Alan Collard – Vice Chair
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Kitty Bourlet
Councillor Trisha Roberts

Apologies were received and noted from:

Councillor Andrea Chinery
County Councillor Peter Schwier

Also, in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken
Two members of the public were present
Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

22/115. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

No declarations of Members interests were made.

22/116. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

Concerns were raised regarding the state of the land either side of Berwick Hall Drive, especially as they are a fire risk due to the very dry conditions. There have been several local fires which have added to the concerns of residents. Prior to this meeting the Parish Clerk was asked to contact the landowner to see if he could clear the fields. This has been done and the landowner requested names of local contractors who may be able to help. Local contractors' names were given to the clerk and the meeting to pass on to the land owner.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported:

- Confirmed the grant for the electrical work at the pavilion was granted.
- Planning permission for the retention of the two lodges at Toppesfield Hall has been granted.
- Braintree District Council will have a new Chief Executive in September following the retirement of Andy Wright.
- Braintree District Council's Climate Action Plan has been approved and they aim to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- The members forum has been approved – this is for large/strategic planning applications and will give the developers an opportunity to sit with interested parties to discuss the application and hopefully address any issues prior to the application being submitted.
- VAS – vehicle activated signs – Essex County Council will no longer pay for these unless it can be shown vehicles are doing 10pmh more than the allowed speed.
- The Plaza at Horizon 120 is now open for business and tenants are coming in.
- Fly-tips – in Braintree in 2021/22 there were 751 reported cases. Which is a 10% decrease from last year. The council do pursue and fine offenders.

22/117. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 7th July 2022 were accepted. The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

CRN

22/118. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

No matters were arising.

22/119. Actions from previous meeting:

- 22/119.1 Councillor Bourlet to provide quotes for 5 a-side goals/nets for Gainsford End **playing field** – cost were sought however costs for moveable posts need to be gained.
- 22/119.2 Councillor Collard to follow up on the possibility of getting a water supply to the pavilion. A contractor is visiting the site to measure up the work. The nearest water supply point has been located which is approximately 40-50 foot away from the pavilion.
- 22/119.3 Councillor Neale - progress the setting up of a mobile phone contract for the parish council phone Number. This is progressing but ~~as the contract is in Royal Free names, had to contact the provider and then Councillor Neale to progress~~ C.M.N.
- 22/119.4 Councillor Neale update on replacement backboard for the basketball hoop – ongoing.

22/120. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

- 22/120.1 Neighbourhood Plan update. Councillor Collard confirmed that the grant application has been sent to Locality for writing of the policies.
Councillor Roberts stated that the Wethersfield Airbase site falls in four parishes – Finchingfield, Wethersfield, Sible Hedingham and Toppesfield. It has been proposed that Finchingfield and Wethersfield produce a joint neighbourhood plan to cover the prison and have asked if information can be gained from Toppesfield Parish Council as appropriate. The parish council were in agreement to share information as needed.
- 22/120.2 Update on plans for the Playing Field – a quote has been received for the work, but this excludes the water connections. Once the total cost is known the financing of the project needs to be arranged through grants and the parish council's own funds. The petanque court installation could be carried out as a separate project.
- 22/120.3 Update on proposed village Charity. Councillor Collard reported that the charity commission needed a bank account number before the charity can be registered but to open a bank account the charity number is required. It has now been confirmed that as the charity will be a CIO no account details are required to register. Councillor Collard to progress.
- 22/120.4 Wethersfield Airfield proposed development update. Councillor Roberts confirmed the latest WASC update has been circulated to councillors and is available on the parish website. The Ministry of Justice agents are in contact with Essex County Council as part of their pre application process. Highpoint Prison has just been granted permission to extend and in general recruitment and retention of staff is an issue for prisons.
- 22/120.5 Informal Strategy Working Group – date to be arranged – Councillor Neale to liaise with Councillor Collard to progress this.
- 22/120.6 Village Group Meeting – date to be arranged - Councillor Neale to liaise with Councillor Collard to progress this.
- 21/120.7 Discuss the possibility for the parish council become a member of BALC. This was discussed and the parish council agreed to join the Braintree Association of Local Councils and Councillor Roberts will be the parish council representative.
- 21/120.8 Proposal to request bids for constructing new petanque court. Councillor Collard has received and circulated the specifications for the courts. The petanque club are happy with the proposal and the cricket club agree with the proposed position. Councillor Collard proposed that firm quotes for the work are sought and that the parish council pay 50% of the costs with the other 50% coming from grants and the petanque club. It was agreed to seek quotes before looking at the financing. Councillor Collard to progress.

22/121. Correspondence Received:

- 22/121.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 22/121.2 Braintree District Council Choice Based Lettings Briefing - Wednesday 17th August 2022, Causeway House Committee Area at 9.30am
- 22/121.3 PKF Littlejohn LLP Receipt of documents – notification of exempt status, 2022. PKF Littlejohn LLP have received and logged the notification of exempt status for the year ended 31 March 2022 for Toppesfield Parish Council. By notifying PKF that Toppesfield Parish Council has claimed

exemption there is no review to be performed and consequently no auditor certificate and report, or any other closure documentation, will be issued by PKF for this reporting year.

22/121.4 Request received to approach farmers to plough a fire break within their fields. It was agreed to approach local landowners to see if this could be done especially where fields border houses/populated areas. Councillors Neale and Collard to progress.

22/121.5 Braintree District Council - First results on the population and the number of households in local authority areas received and circulated to all Councillors.

Additional Correspondence:

Comments received regarding the sale of the Mission Hall in Gainsford End.

22/122. Financial Accounts:

22/122.2 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received and approved. All other payments on the schedule were approved. See Appendix A for details.

22/123. Highways:

22.123.1 Essex County Council warnings issued about potential dangers of missing drain covers. The reporting of any missing drain should be done online at:

<https://www.essexhighways.org/roads-and-pavements/potholes#report>.

Reports will go straight to their inspectors who can then assess each incident. ECC has asked people to be vigilant and report any thefts to the Police should you see any take place.

Councillor Neale will follow up with County Councillor Peter Schwier regarding the dip in the road on Toppesfield Road, residents are reporting damage to their vehicles due to the defect in the road.

22/124. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
22/02035/TPOCON	Notice of intent to carry out works to tree in conservation area – reduce a Cherry tree by 8-10ft	St Margaret's Church Toppesfield, CO9 4DS	Comments to be made to Braintree District Council by 29 th August 2022

The above application was discussed and no objections were raised.

22/125. Communications:

22/125.1 Comments have been received regarding the size of the font used in the newsletter – should this be increased? This was discussed and it was agreed to keep the A5 size of newsletter but to increase the font size in articles to font 14.

22/126. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

No information was exchange and no items were raised at this time for the next agenda.

22/127. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 1st September 2022 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall

22/128. Close

Councillor Neale closed the meeting at 9.25pm

Signed:



Dated:

1.9.22

Action Summary:

- Councillor Bourlet to provide quotes for moveable 5 a-side goals/nets for Gainsford End playing field.**
- Councillor Neale - continue to progress the setting up of a mobile phone contract for the parish council phone number.**
- Councillor Neale update on replacement backboard for the basketball hoop.**
- Councillor Collard to seek quotes for the installation of the petanque courts.**
- Councillor Collard to progress the registering of the Charity.**
- Councillor's Neale and Collard to approach farmers to plough a fire break within their fields.**

Appendix A

Accounts - 4th August 2022

		£	
Community Account			
	Balance as at 3 August 2022	£29,563.81	
All previous payments issued balance should be		<u>£29,264.29</u>	
Income Received Included in the balance figure of 03.08.22			
28.07.22	Braintree District Council - Community Grant	£300.00	
11.07.22	EDF - Credit refund	£9.52	
		<u>£309.52</u>	
Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (included in balance figure of 03.08.22)			
01.08.22	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply	£10.00	£0.00
		<u>£10.00</u>	
			Unrecoverable VAT
Payments to be approved:			
Date of invoice		Chq No:	
21.06.22	GW Electrical - sockets installed at the pavilion	By Bacs	£300.00 £0.00
30.06.22	Easy PC Accounts - Licence fee for 2022-2023	By Bacs	£50.00 £0.00
	Braintree Association of Local Councils (BALC) Membership	By Bacs	£40.00 £0.00
various	K Berry - Ink, stationery, stamps, storage boxes, bulbs for defib kiosk	By Bacs	£153.24 £0.00
01.08.22	K Berry - July wages	By Bacs	£502.92 £0.00
			<u>£1,046.16</u>
			£28,517.65