



# Toppesfield Parish Council

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm**



## **22/1. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:**

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

Councillor Alan Collard – Chair  
Councillor Amanda Smith  
Councillor Boyd Page  
Councillor Trisha Roberts

Also, in attendance:

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

Apologies were received and noted from:

Councillor Chris Neale – Vice chair  
Councillor Andrea Chinery

## **22/2. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:**

No declarations of Members interests were made.

## **22/3. Open Session** – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

County Council Peter Schwier reported:

- There could be an increase of 4.5% in the Essex County Council portion of the Council Tax for the coming financial year – this being 1.5% from last year, 1% for social care and 2% in core council tax. The council are still looking at efficiency and savings and their proportion of the council tax has not increased in several years.
- The Climate Change Action fund is still open and welcoming applications of up to £20,000 per project.
- The Arts & Culture Fund has opened in the last few days
- There have been lots of reported incidents relating to PROW (Public Rights of Way) which are being looked at.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported:

- The latest planning application for the Fishing Lakes in Great Yeldham is due for a decision shortly.
- The Councillors Community Grant Fund is still open and encouraged the parish council to apply for funding towards their community coffee mornings.
- He thanked everyone for the patience regarding the waste collections over the holiday period as crews were given a week off during Christmas and New Year. Subsequent delays were due to covid and other illnesses.
- A recent customer satisfaction survey showed that 80% of respondents are satisfied with Braintree District Council and 87% were satisfied with the waste collections.
- Councillor van Dulken also reposted he has not heard anything further regarding a planning application for the proposed Wethersfield Prison.

## **22/4. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting**

The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

## **22/5. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only**

Councillor Collard reported that Councillor Gemma Mackman has resigned her position as councillor and thanked her service to Toppesfield Parish Council.

## **22/6. Actions from previous meeting:**

- 22/6.1 Clerk to follow up with residents of 7 Park Lane regarding access rights over the car park in Park Lane in January 2022. The resident is waiting to hear back from their solicitors and has also raised this with Braintree District Council and is waiting for their reply.  
Clerk to contact the parish council's solicitors if they are within their rights to restrict access.
- 22/6.2 Councillor Smith to gain formal written quote and drawings for a wooden shelter for the playing field. This is not able to be gained at present as the potential supplier is currently in hospital.
- 22/6.3 Clerk to finalize letter to Anglian Water regarding rights of way over the access road – this has been sent and a follow up email sent requesting a response. Clerk to follow up again.
- 22/6.4 Councillor Collard to contact Braintree District Council planning re call for sites. Councillor Collard enquires have suggested that a call for sites is called before changing the village envelope and an external body could be engaged to help with the call for sites.
- 22/6.5 Clerk to enquire on the process of changing the village envelope and contact RCCE re funding to help draft policies for the Neighbourhood plan. The village envelope can be changed through planning policy or the Neighbourhood Plan. Before funding can be sought for drafting the policies quotes are required.
- 22/6.6 Councillor Page to inspect the beacon and assess its safety – an inspection has been carried out along with maintenance work on the beacon.
- 22/6.7 Clerk to email the village groups/organisations for a short article for the Welcome Packs – an email was sent out and responses are coming in slowly.
- 22/6.8 Clerk to purchase the latest edition of Local Council Administration book by Charles Arnold Baker. This was purchased and has been received.

## **22/7. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:**

- 22/7.1 Resignation of Councillor Mackman and Co-option of 7<sup>th</sup> Councillor – Councillor Collard thanked Councillor Mackman for her work during her time as parish councillor. Suggestions on who could be co-opted are welcomed. Braintree District Council have been advised of the resignation.
- 22/7.2 Neighbourhood Plan update – Councillor Page reported this is progressing.
- 22/7.3 Update on plans for the Playing Field – Councillor Collard reported 300 trees and shrubs have been planted and work on the school pond area is due to commence later in the year. Plans for the pavilion to incorporate toilets and the petanque court locations are being drawn up. The new play equipment has been installed and is being used frequently.
- 22/1.4 Update re Green Man barn - Councillor Collard reported that the Toppesfield Community Pub committee (TCP) are supportive for the shop to occupy the end section of the barn but there is no decision as yet as to sell the barn or lease it to the shop. TCP have asked if the parish council could help fund the refurbishment of the barn or would the shop have to pay for the refurbishment. It was agreed to put the project on hold until the TCP have made a decision to sell or lease the barn.
- 22/1.5 Jubilee Event update – no update was available, but it was suggested that an advert was issued asking for people to assist with the planning and organising of this. Councillor Collard to arrange a meeting date for those interested to help with the events.
- 22/1.6 Update on proposed village Charity – Councillor Collard confirmed the documents are ready and 4 people have accepted to be trustees and nearly all the nominated trustees have confirmed. A bank account needs to be opened and registration with Charity Commission needs to be completed.  
Councillor Collard to progress. WAS NOT . C.N
- 22/1.7 Wethersfield Airfield proposed development update – the Scoping document ~~has been~~ published on Braintree District Council's website. A response has been submitted by the multi parish group along with responses from other groups. Sub committees have been set up to look at various aspects of the project. A brief survey will be sent out in the newsletter to all residents to seek their feedback regarding the prison proposal.



## 22/8. Correspondence Received:

- 22/8.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 22/8.2 Braintree District Council – Open Spaces Action Plan 2022 – updates and amendments to be provided to Braintree DC by 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Clerk to complete as detailed in the previous submission.
- 22/8.3 Braintree District Council Local Plan Section 2 consultation open until 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Proposed Main Modifications to the Draft Section 2 Plan is now taking place in accordance with section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Council has published an accompanying revised Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and updated Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) to support the proposed modifications and responses on these documents are also requested. The Council has also published a series of 'Additional modifications' and map changes of a minor or factual nature. The documents are available at [www.braintree.gov.uk/MMS2](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/MMS2) Responses can be made online via the link above or a response form can be downloaded from the Council website.
- 22/8.4 Finchingfield Bridge – For the latest update regarding the bridge please visit Essex Highways website: <https://www.essexhighways.org/future-plans-finchingfield-bridge>.

## 22/9. Financial Accounts:

- 22/9.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received. Councillor Smith proposed this was approved and Councillor Collard seconded this. See Appendix A
- 22/9.2 To discuss and finalise the budget for 2022/2023 – the draft budget was discussed Councillor Page proposed it was accepted and Councillor Smith seconded this. Clerk to complete precept return forms and submit to Braintree District Council.
- 22/9.3 Proposal to look at or purchase accounting package for the Parish Council – it was agreed for the clerk to explore Scribe - Software for Parish, Town & Community Councils ([scribeaccounts.com](http://scribeaccounts.com)) and Easy PC Accounts | [mijan-consulting.co.uk](http://mijan-consulting.co.uk) and report back at the next meeting.

## 22/10. Highways:

- 22/10.1 White Hart Bridge on Poole Street (A1017), Great Yeldham, Halstead, Essex. CO9 4HJ. Plans are in place to carry out trial hole investigation, works begin on Monday 10 January 2022 and are anticipated to take one week to complete, subject to weather being suitable and no unexpected issues arising. During this time temporary two-way traffic lights will be in place to manage traffic flows to allow the work to take place safely. [www.essex.gov.uk/highways](http://www.essex.gov.uk/highways)

## 22/11. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
21/03738/AGR	Application for prior notification of agricultural or forestry development - Erection of hay and machinery store.	Weybridge Bungalow Stambourne Road CO9 4RB	This is for information only and due to the type of application Braintree District Council do not seek the parish Councils comments.

## 22/12. Communications:

It was mentioned that Facebook posts and website updates do not reach everyone and it was suggested there could be a report section in the Newsletter as this goes to each household. It was agreed this could be done.

## 22/13. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

It was suggested a working group session be arranged to discuss potential village projects.

## 22/14. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

## 22/15. Close

Councillor Collard closed the meeting at 9.47pm

Signed: 

Dated: 3.2.2022

### Action Summary:

Clerk to contact the parish council's solicitors if they are within their rights to restrict access over the Park Lane Car Park.

Councillor Collard to arrange a meeting date/place for people to discuss the Jubilee Event celebrations.

Councillor Collard to progress the setting up of the village charity.

Clerk to complete and submit the Open Space Action Plan.

Clerk to complete precept return forms and submit to Braintree District Council.

Clerk to explore Scribe - Software for Parish, Town & Community Councils and report back at the next meeting.

## Appendix A

Accounts - 13 January 2022

		£
Community Account		
	Balance as at 12 January 2022	£36,247.31
All previous payments issued balance should be		<u>£36,076.91</u>
Income Received Included in the balance figure of 12.01.22		
23.12.21	Fundraising - play equipment	£312.00
		<u>£312.00</u>
Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (included in balance figure of 12.01.22)		
01.01.22	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply	£6.00
15.12.22	SLCC - Charles Arnold Baker publication	£123.80
		<u>£129.80</u>

Payments to be approved:

Date of invoice		Chq No:	
4.12.21	Toppesfield Village Hall, quartetly invoice and hall hire - Sept - Dec	By Bacs	£331.50
08.12.21	Fun Bunz Ltd - The Green Man - Christmas lights refreshments	By Bacs	£225.00
20.12.21	ESP Play - balance of new play equipment	By Bacs	£3,626.10
20.12.21	B Page - timber for village sign making	By Bacs	£299.71
11.01.22	Toppesfield Village Hall, quartetly invoice and hall hire - Jan - March	By Bacs	£298.50
01.01.22	K Berry - December wages	By Bacs	£380.94
			<u>£5,161.75</u>
			£31,097.36