



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 8th June 2023 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

23/98. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Kitty Bourlet
Councillor Trisha Roberts
Councillor Frances Winter
Councillor Jeremy Graves

Also, in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken
Kaaren Berry – Clerk

Apologies were received from:
County Councillor Peter Schwier

23/99. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items

Cllr Winter declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 23/103.3

23/100. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

Councillor van Dulken reported:

- He had called into the site office for the bridge works on the A1017 (Nr the White Hart) but no further information as to when works will be complete expect for Summer 2023.
- Wethersfield Airbase prison/Asylum Centre – An appeal is being heard at the Court of Appeal on the 12 June which will be live streamed. A judicial review will be heard on the 12/13 July and the Home Office have confirmed that there will be no residents on site prior to the 26th June 2023.
- Dart 3 – Cllr van Dulken attended a meeting with Essex County Council, Arrow Taxis and Dart 3 and requested advertising material to promote their service. There is provision for a service from the Pump in Toppesfield to Haverhill on a Friday, leaving at 10am and returning at 2pm but to retain this service it needs to be used. Cllr van Dulken to source advertising materials.
- The decision as to whether BDC will charge for the garden waste collection will be made in July.
- Councillors Community Grant - £100 has been granted to the Church for children's activities over the summer. A application was received for installing matting in The Green Pub garden but the application did not meet the grant fund criteria. £400 is reserved for the Men's Shed project in Gt Yeldham so there are still funds available.

23/101. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr Smith that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18th May 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

23/102. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only.

Cllr Smith gave an update on setting up a football team. For several reasons this was not possible to set this up independently but a school football team has been established. Cllr Smith asked if the parish council would

support a grant application for the cost of training equipment. Cllr Smith was advised to ask Toppesfield Community Shop to see if they would be able to give a grant for this.

It was reported that 2 plots of land have been put up for sale by auction along Park Lane with a guide price of £10,000 each. It was questioned if this could be a good basis for affordable homes as a rural exception site. Cllr Collard to liaise with BDC planning to see if planning permission would be achievable.

23/103. Actions from previous meeting:

23/103.1 Cllr Collard to arrange the informal strategy working group meeting – this has been arranged for the 12th June and a further meeting will be held in the Autumn.

23/103.2 Cllr Collard to draw up a rota for the Dr Car service – this has been drawn up and circulated to councillors.

23/103.3 Cllr Winter to circulate documents regarding the village hall lease and all councillors to review prior to the next parish council meeting. The information was circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Winter reported that clause 8 in the governing document is restrictive, the charity commissions remit is wider. Advice from the RCCE and the charity commission was that the village hall committee were allowed to change the clause 8 without consultation with the parish council as it is a governing document only.

The lease and the village hall policies were discussed at length and it was agreed to leave the lease as it is but the village hall will update their financial policy and review all their other policies. Cllr Bourlet offered to help to do this.

It was suggested to arrange a meeting between the parish council, the village hall and the community shop to discuss general operating practices and hold half yearly meetings to maintain good communications and operating practices between all parties.

23/104. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

23/104.1 Neighbourhood Plan update – Cllr Collard reported that a draft plan is hoped to be completed by the end of June.

23/104.2 Joint Neighbourhood Plan - Cllr Collard to liaise with John Pearce regarding the Finchingfield/Wethersfield joint Neighbourhood Plan, as it impacts on the airbase. Cllr Roberts reported WASC have applied for a number of buildings on the airfield to be listed, some of which are in the parish of Toppesfield and Historic England are recommending the listing.

23/104.3 Update on proposed village Charity – Cllr Collard has met with Jan Stobart from the RCCE who has given guidance on reapplying to the charity commission.

23/104.4 Wethersfield Airfield and Asylum centre update. A full update was given and several groups are awaiting the outcome of upcoming appeals with the High Court.

20/104.5 Parish Council Office Overhaul – Cllr Winter commented on the poor working conditions in the parish office and as an employer the parish council has a duty of care. Clerk to compile a list of what improvements could be made to the office space.

23/104.6 Overgrown area behind the pavilion, update including quotes received – no quotes had been received. It was reported the area has had some rubbish dumped but not too overgrown. It was suggested that the rubbish is removed and leave the trimming of the hedge until September to avoid any nesting birds. The school will also be advised to trim the hedge their side.

23/104.7 Update on basketball hoop and works required – Cllr Winter has researched an acrylic backboard and costs would be £208.73 plus a £15 delivery charge. It was discussed whether a wooden backboard would be better. It was proposed that Cllr Winter to look into this and then progress project up to the cost of the acrylic board as above and seconded by Cllr Smith.

23/104.8 Verge cutting – it was agreed to get verges cut so the views at junctions are not obstructed.

23/105. Correspondence Received:

23/105.1 EALC Legal & County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.

23/105.2 Essex Highways - Salt Bag Partnership Scheme for Winter 2023/24 has been launched. Closing date is the 24th July 2023 to confirm if the parish council would like to take part. It was agreed that the parish council would take part in the scheme this year.

23/106. Financial Accounts:

23/106.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received, Cllr Bourlet proposed the report is accepted and Cllr Smith seconded this. All payments were approved. See Appendix A for details.

It was asked if the contribution to WASC as budgeted could be made at the next meeting. This will be placed on the next agenda for consideration.

23/106.2 Accounts for year 2022/23.

To approve the accounts and sign the Annual Return, for the year ending 31 March 2023.

The Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer/Clerk to sign:

- Annual Governance Statement.
- Accounting Statements.

The Annual Return forms were completed, and the statements signed.

23/107. Highways:

23/107.1 Road Traffic Regulation ACT 1984 – Section 14(1). Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Hedingham Road, Wethersfield

Please see the following link <https://one.network/?tm=133650975> to find details of the intended closure of Hedingham Road, due to commence on 26th June 2023 for 3 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes drainage.

23/108. Planning:

No items were discussed under this heading.

23/109. Communications:

Representatives for Braintree Association of Local Councils and WASC need to be appointed and administration of the Facebook page needs to be addressed as Chris Neale is no longer on the parish council.

23/110. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

23/111. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 6th July 2023 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

23/112. Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 10 pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

- Meeting to be arranged between the Village Hall, Community shop and the parish council regarding general working practices.
- Clerk to compile a list of what improvements could be made to the office space.
- Cllr Winter to progress the repair of the basketball hoop backboard.

Appendix A

Accounts -8th June 2023				
			£	
Community Account				
	Balance as at 6th June 2023		£40,402.70	
All previous payments issued balance should be			<u>£41,507.87</u>	
Income Received Included in the balance figure of 06.06.23				
			£0.00	
			<u>£0.00</u>	
Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance figure on the 06.06.23)				
05.06.23	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		£10.00	
			<u>£10.00</u>	
Other payments made since last meeting (already deducted from the balance fingure on 06.06.23)				
30.05.23	BHIB Insurance cover 1st June 2023 - 31 May 2024		£1,095.17	
			<u>£1,095.17</u>	
				Unrecoverable VAT
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice		Chq No:		
02.06.23	Toppesfield Village Hall - Quartely rent for office space and hall hire for meetings	By Bacs	£334.50	£0.00
23.05.23	Playsafety Ltd - RoSPA inspections and reports for the playing fields.	By Bacs	£196.80	£0.00
25.05.23	EAS Medical - First Aid Training - AED/BLS Session	By Bacs	£125.00	£0.00
01.06.23	K Berry - May salary	By Bacs	£502.92	£0.00
			<u>£1,159.22</u>	
			£39,243.48	