



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 6th June 2019 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 7.30pm

19/92. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard - Chair
Councillor Andrew Bull
Councillor Andrea Chinery
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Boyd Page
Councillor Chris Neale

Also, in attendance:

10 members of the public were in attendance
Representative from County Broadband
District Councillor Richard van Dulken
Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council

No Apologies were received

19/93. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items:

No declarations of Members interests were made.

19/94. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

An update was requested on the progress of obtaining a Defibrillator for Gainsford End – Community Heartbeat Trust has informed the Parish Council there is a delay from the manufacture in obtaining the cabinet. They will keep the Parish Council informed of progress. Training was also requested once the defibrillator is installed. It was agreed to look into training for using the defibrillator.

The state of the hedges in Gainsford End were mentioned as they are becoming a hazard as they have not been cut back. It was asked if Highways could cut these where the hedges are not on private land. The hedges at the Mission Hall have also not been maintained but since the hall has just been sold this may be resolved by the new owners.

The speed of traffic through Gainsford End was mentioned and it was asked if this could be reduced. Alan Collard confirmed this would need to be addressed through Highways.

A parishioner spoke about climate change and whether the Parish Council could plant more broad leaf trees as there are a lot of dead ash trees around the parish. It was suggested these could be cut down and the wood sold on to help fund the purchase of new trees. It was suggested that landowners be approached to see if they would take part by allowing the parish to plant trees on their land. It was proposed an article could be placed in the newsletter to try to set up a working group and for the parish council to hold funds raised and promote this idea if it is agreed in principle. Councillor Page requested the number of ash trees which are dead and for their locations before this is taken forward.

A resident from Gainsford end confirmed the Old Chapel Field was purchased approx. 5 years ago and an application to build a dwelling has only just been made. He stated he is happy to answer questions regarding

the application. Concerns from residents regarding planning application no 19/00968/OUT were: water pressure, issues regarding sewage and drainage, location and length of drive.

It was questioned if the Parish Council are setting up a Neighbourhood Plan group to progress this. Also, if residents have any say in it regarding Gainsford End as this could have an impact on land usage. It was confirmed the first meeting is being held on 26th June by the RCCE in the hope to move the project forward.

Concerns were raised regarding the speed of traffic along Park Lane and track at the end of it. Could traffic calming measures be implemented? Councillor Collard stated landowners would need to be contacted for traffic calming measures as the track is not Highways owned. It was agreed to put a piece in the newsletter to remind people to slow down as the track is regularly used by children, dog walkers and walkers.

Concerns were also raised regarding a reportedly unoccupied Greenfields property. It was reported that Greenfields have been contacted and they state the property is the resident's 'main and principal home'.

The County Broadband representative gave an update on their fibre project for Toppesfield. Preparation works will start later this month with connections to the network will commence in August/September. The offer for a free connection is still available at present. There will be some disruption in August and September due to the works and the normal applications have been made thorough Highways regarding road use interruptions.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken thanked everyone who voted for him in the recent elections and he is looking forward to continue working with the parish over the next four years. The Councillors Community Grant is available again this year - £1500 is available between 3 villages.

19/95. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9th May 2019 were approved and signed as correct.

19/96. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only

The Parish Council policies are being updated.

19/97. Actions from previous meeting:

- 19/97.1 Kaaren Berry to follow up in enquiry with Braintree District Council about costs for a new dog waste bin for the bottom of the Toppesfield playing field – chase up call has been made and relogged.
- 19/97.2 Councillor Andrew Bull to write to the owner of the remaining vehicle and then look at a tidy up of the car park. The owner has been spoken to again but the car remains. Further advice to be sort from ELAC regarding this.
- 19/97.3 Councillor Andrew Bull to write to Mr Ketley re the amount of the mud on the Toppesfield Road. Conversations have been held with Mr Ketley regarding this and at present this does not appear to be an issue.
- 19/97.4 Councillor Andrew Bull to write to owners of the Mission Hall regarding the state of the hedges. Councillor Bull confirmed he wrote to the owners at the time but there was nothing was heard back from them. Councillor Chris Neale will follow this up with Highways.
- 19/97.5 Kaaren Berry to seek available dates with the EALC for a 2-hour training session – chase up email sent to acquire dates.
- 19/97.6 Councillor Andrea Chinery to produce a notice with emergency contact details for display – Councillor Andrea Chinery has prepared the notice and to email clerk for completion.
- 19/97.7 Kaaren Berry to speak to Dedham Parish Council re granting monies to the Church – discussed under agenda item 19/100.2.
- 19/97.8 Councillor Boyd Page to research the legal position regarding works to common land and if there are any conditions on the common land in Church Lane. Councillor Boyd Page confirmed there is no owner of the land but has emailed Braintree District Council t o see if they are responsible for maintaining it or is it the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Open Spaces Society will come out to have a look at all the parish open spaces and offer advice on them. This covers open spaces, footpaths and rights of way.
- 19/97.9 Councillor Chris Neale to report the leaning 30mph signs to Essex County Council. It was reported that Highways completed a survey earlier in the year and no action is required at present. Councillor Chris Neale is appealing this.

19/97.10 Councillor Chris Neale to look at road signage to show there is a school in Church Lane and '20 is plenty' type of signs. Still being looked at with Essex County Council.

19/98. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

- 19/98.1 Neighbourhood Plan – first meeting agenda for comment – the agenda for the first meeting was agreed. Councillor Boyd Page to attend the first meeting. A councillor will aim to attend each meeting.
- 19/98.2 Elect a Councillor to lead on Playing Field projects – Councillor Andrew Bull will lead on projects.
- 19/98.3 Parish Councillor training – contact EALC re this.
- 19/98.4 Consideration request to join the Open Spaces Society, <https://www.oss.org.uk> Councillor Boyd Page proposed that the Parish Council join the Open Spaces Society at a cost of £45 per year. This was discussed and the proposal seconded by Councillor Andrew Bull. All present agreed to this.
- 19/98.5 Consideration of working towards the Local Council Award Scheme – Foundation Level. All councillors to look at this and re-agenda for next month.
- 19/98.6 Neighbourhood Watch – Alan Preston has confirmed he will continue as the Neighbourhood Watch contact for the parish.
- 19/98.7 Proposal to establish a working group to look at funding opportunities. This was discussed and all councillors are willing to be part of this.

19/99. Correspondence Received:

- 19/99.1 EALC Legal and County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.
- 19/99.2 Invitation for the Chair to attend the Annual Meeting and Summer Reception at the University of Essex on 21st June 2019 at 2pm.
- 19/99.3 Essex County Council Salt Bag Partnership Scheme for winter 2019/20 – do we require a delivery of salt to use on the public highways which is not already salted by Essex County Council. All councillors to identify storage areas and check on current stock levels.
- 19/99.4 Braintree District Neighbourhood Watch AGM/conference- 30th July, 2pm at Gosfield Village Hall. Invitation to be passed to Alan Preston.
- 19/99.5 RCCE – Oyster Spring 2019 publication received.

Late correspondence:

Latest editions of Clerk Magazine and Essex Heritage News received.
Letter from the Stop Stanstead Expansion received detailing their current position.
Correspondence from Mrs Clark re hedging on her land – The parish council are aware of the issue.

19/100. Financial Accounts:

- 19/100.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval - the report was received and payments approved
- 19/100.2 Grant funding request from St Margaret's Church 2019. It was agreed the position is still not clear as to the legality of this. Decision to be deferred until further clarification received.
- 19/100.3 Bank mandate forms – completed and Councillors to take ID into Barclays for verification.
- 19/100.4. Accounts year ending 2018/19. To approve the accounts and sign the Annual Return, for the year ending 31 March 2019. The Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer/Clerk to sign:
- Certificate of Exemption 2018/19 stating that the gross income/expenditure did not exceed £25,000.
 - Annual Governance Statement.
 - Accounting Statements.

Councillor Andrea Chinery proposed the accounts were accepted and Councillor Amanda Smith seconded this. Councillor Alan Collard completed and signed the Certificate of Exemption, Annual Governance and Accounting statements.

19/101. Highways:

- 19/101.1 Reports of an Unoccupied Greenfield Housing Association Bungalow in Toppesfield – this was mentioned in the open session and it was noted there may be another property in The Causeway where it is not the tenant's main home. Councillor Alan Collard to find out what the procedure is regarding this.
- 19/101.2 Essex County Council – parish footway defects – questionnaire to be completed with details of the

footpath along Church Lane.

19/101.3 Footpath 51 – It was agreed to continue with this with the help of Alan Preston due to his previous involvement with the project.

19/102. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
19/00542/HH	Retrospective application for the conversion of out building into habitable room and single storey rear extension linking existing outbuilding to main dwelling	13 Church Lane Toppesfield Essex CO9 4DS	Application GRANTED
19/00968/OUT	Change of use from unused agricultural land and erection of a new dwelling, garage/carport and alterations to existing vehicular access.	Land Adjacent To Mission Hall, Gainsford End, Toppesfield	Comments to Braintree District Council by 28 th June 2019

The above application for the land adjacent to the Mission Hall and the parish council have no objections to this application.

19/103. Toppesfield Village Hall

19/103.1 Update from Village Hall Management Committee, including update on the insurance position – Councillor Andrea Chinery reported that tomorrow a working party at the village hall where odd jobs will be carried out. Correspondence from the Charity Commission has been received regarding the insurance and they think that the village hall is responsible for the insurance, therefore they will continue to pay this. Funding is also being sort to insulate the walls of the hall.

19/104. Playing Fields & The Dick Ruggles Pavilion

19/104.1 RoSPA reports for the Toppesfield and Gainsford End Playing Fields – it was agreed to take the swings down as the first stage of replacement as suggest in the report. Councillor Boyd Page to do this. Councillor Andrew Bull reported the goal posts are normally anchored down but they are regularly moved. New nets for the five-a-side goals to be purchase by Councillor Bull. With regard to the hole in the matting by the swing Robert Stafford-Baker will be asked about repairing this.

19/105. Communications

19/105.1 Update on Proposal to set up a working group to report back with recommendations – Councillor Andrew Bull to continue to maintain the Facebook page and Councillor Chris Neale is willing to support in this.

19/105.2 Newsletter – it was agreed to restart the newsletter in July. Clerk to contact groups for articles.

19/106. Information exchange / Parish Surgery / Items for the next agenda

It was suggested a policy is required to inform contractors who has been awarded jobs.

Internet/Computer classes or workshops have been requested – Councillor Chris Neale to look at this.

Parking along Church Lane and Stambourne Road is an issue as it reduces visibility for the children and parents using the school and pre-school – what could be done about this. To be looked at and discussed the next meeting.

Next parish surgery is the 6th July 2019.

19/107. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 4th July 2019 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

19/108. Close

The meeting closed at 10.30 pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

Kaaren Berry to follow up in enquiry with Braintree District Council about costs for a new dog waste bin for the bottom of the Toppesfield playing field.

Kaaren Berry to ask EALC further advice regarding the remaining vehicle in the car park.

Councillor Chris Neale to speak to Highways regarding the state of the hedges at the Mission Hall.

Kaaren Berry to seek available dates with the EALC for a 2-hour training session.

Councillor Andrea Chinery to forward notice with emergency contact details for display to clerk for completion and display.

Councillor Boyd Page to update on position regarding works to common land and if there are any conditions on the common land in Church Lane.

Councillor Chris Neale to report on appeal to Essex County Council of the leaning 30mph signs.

Councillor Boyd Page to progress application to Open Spaces Society.

All Councillors to identify storage areas for salt stocks and check on current levels.

Councillor Alan Collard to enquire what the procedure is for possibly unoccupied/not main residence Greenfield properties.

Appendix A

Accounts – 6 June 2019		£	£	
National Savings Deposit Account:				
Balance as at 1st January 2019		<u>£2,625.57</u>		
Community Account				
Balance as at 31 May 2019			<u>£24,164.23</u>	
Subtotal:		<u>£2,625.57</u>		
All previous issued cheques cashed balance should be		<u>£2,625.57</u>	<u>£22,612.75</u>	
Income Received (Included in above balance)				
23.05.19	Braintree District Council - Street Cleaning Agreement		£1,173.98	
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice			Chq No:	Unrecoverable VAT
22.05.19	Playsafety Limited - RoSPA reports for Toppesfield and Gainsford End Playing Fields		101880	£164.40 £0.00
31.05.19	K Berry - May wages		101879	£272.18 £0.00
				<u>£436.58</u>
Balance		<u>£2,625.57</u>		<u>£23,350.15</u>
Last bank statement received up to 31st May 2019				