



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 5th October 2023 at Toppesfield Village Hall at 7.30pm

23/160. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Alan Collard
Councillor Jeremy Graves
Councillor Amanda Smith
Councillor Paula Edwards-Holmes
Councillor Jane Daines (following her co-option)

Also, in attendance:

District Councillor Richard van Dulken
One member of the public
Jan Stobart – Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE)
Kaaren Berry – Clerk

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Kitty Bourlet
Councillor Frances Winter
County Councillor Peter Schwier

23/161. Declaration of Members' interests in agenda items

There were no declarations of interest reported.

23/162. Open Session – opportunity for members of the Parish to address the Parish Council.

Jan Stobart attended the meeting to inform the Parish Council on the next steps of the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) processes.

A draft plan has been circulated to all councillors and Paul Munson (consultant for the NHP). It is felt that the plan is nearly ready for submission to Braintree District Council (BDC). The plan is on course that a village referendum will be held next spring.

Jan Stobart clarified the process of the pre-submission plan – the parish council would need to approve it at a parish council meeting and then put the plan out for consultation to residents, local landowners, and other statutory consultees. The plan will also need to be published on the parish website and other social media platforms. The consultation period lasts for a minimum of six weeks. Once survey responses regarding the pre-submission plan have been received and analysed any amendments can be made.

The parish council need to produce a Consultation statement and a Basic Conditions statement before submitting the draft to BDC.

Jan Stobart will confirm if a new housing needs survey is to be carried out as this could run alongside the NHP and quotes will be sought for services to produce the necessary documentation before a grant application can be made.

Councillor van Dulken sent in his report as below:

- As of 2 weeks ago, 9006 households in Braintree District (out of about 54,000 which have collections) have subscribed to the early bird rate for garden waste collection from April 2024. This is a greater initial indication of interest than anticipated.
- I note that Braintree Planning Department has given what I see as a cautious but qualified thumbs-up to the scoping request for a solar farm at Toppesfield Hall and will be following this.

- Community Grants – please let me know if there are any areas where a grant could be useful, as I have a reasonable balance left.
- Devolution – you may have heard this being mentioned. In Essex, Essex County Council, Southend Borough Council, Thurrock, the District and Borough Councils plus the Police, Fire and Rescue Commissioner are seeking to set up and be part of a new institution to be known as a Combined Authority, which will take collective decisions on the powers and budgets which the government devolves down to Greater Essex under such a deal.
This would NOT be a merger – each authority would remain independent and retain its separate budgets and operations.
There would not be a Mayor for Essex as in other areas of the country, but residents and businesses would benefit from additional funding and from coordination of the authorities within Greater Essex.
- 309 fly tips were cleared within 24 hours during the period 1st April to 30th June.
- There is a public consultation being carried out by Essex County Council (ECC) regarding the future of Recycling Centre bookings, this is an opportunity for members of the public to have their say on the current appointment-based system and all feedback will be used to help determine whether or not this should become a permanent arrangement. ECC will publish a summary report of the consultation feedback after the consultation is complete and responses have been analysed. The consultation runs from the 9th October until the 19th November 2023. Please see the following link for further details <http://www.essex.gov.uk/recyclingcentrebookings>
- The Medical Centre in Sible is still slowly progressing.

23/163. Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting

Amendments were made and then it was proposed by Cllr Edwards-Holmes and seconded by Cllr Graves that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th September 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

23/164. Matters Arising not on the agenda – for report only.

There were no matters arising.

23/165. Co-option of Councillor

23/165.1 An application for co-option was received. Cllr Collard proposed that Jane Daines was co-opted onto the Parish Council, and this was seconded by Cllr Smith. Jane Daines accepted the position of Councillor and joined the rest of the meeting as a councillor.

23/166. Actions from previous meeting:

23/166.1 All Councillors to provide ideas for the Christmas event for the October parish council meeting. Cllr's Bourlet and Smith are meeting next week to progress the planning of the event. A budget of £750 has been set aside for the event.

23/166.2 Clerk to obtain costs for a replacement for the damaged slide. A quote from the original supplier of £1801.96 was received. It was agreed to seek other quotes for a replacement and a stand alone small slide. Clerk to progress this.

23/166.3 Cllrs Collard and Graves to obtain costings for replacement tree along The Causeway. Quotes received and it was agreed the quote from Barcham was accepted. It was also agreed to purchase 6 trees for planting along The Causeway. Cllr Graves to progress this and Cllr Daines will see if a working group can be put together to plant the trees.

23/166.4 Cllr Collard and Clerk to progress an outline planning application for the potential Pump project. Cllr Collard stated that the application form has been completed.

23/166.5 Clerk to progress an application for a salt bin to be installed at Camoise Close. The request has been sent to Cllr Schwier and he has made an application for this to the Local Highway Panel scheme.

23/167. Internal Practices and management for the Parish Council:

23/167.1 Neighbourhood Plan update – this was covered in the open session.

23/167.2 Update on proposed village Charity – Cllr Collard to liaise with Jan Stobart regarding the charity.

23/167.3 Wethersfield Airfield and Asylum centre update – updates are circulated to councillors as they arrive. 160 residents are at the airfield now, the capacity is 220 at present. It is expected to have full capacity by January 2024.

23/167.4 Christmas event – this was discussed under agenda item 23/166.1.

23/167.5 Wikipedia page information – Cllr Collard reported that there has been some rogue information placed on the Toppesfield page. It was agreed that the clerk should monitor the page and amend as necessary.

23/168. Correspondence Received:

23/168.1 EALC Legal & County Updates, Essex County Council Highways Highlights, RCCE Essex Warbler – circulated to all Councillors prior to meeting.

23/168.2 Essex County Council - Have your say on the future of waste management in Essex. The consultation is open until Wednesday 22 November 2023. Please see the following link for more information: [Have your say on the future of waste management in Essex | Essex County Council](#)

23/169. Financial Accounts:

23/169.1 To receive the Clerk's Report indicating receipts and payments requiring approval. The report was received. Cllr Edwards-Holmes proposed that all payments were approved and Cllr Graves seconded this. See Appendix A for details.

Cllr Collard requested that the clerk enquire with EALC whether the clerk's salary should increase as a result of gaining the CiLCA qualification and to report back to the council how many hours a week are spent on council business.

23/169.2 Proposal to approve the costs of replacement trees along The Causeway – this was agreed under agenda item 23/166.3.

23/169.3 Annual Return Response from external auditors – the report from the Auditors has been received and published on the parish council website.

23/169.4 Proposal to purchase Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Day – this was agreed. Clerk to organise ordering and collection of wreath.

23/170. Highways:

23/170.1 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 – Section 14(1). Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Stambourne Road, Toppesfield. Please see the following link <https://one.network/?tm=135183850> to find details of the intended closure of Stambourne Road, due to commence on 11th October 2023 for 3 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex County Council undertakes carriageway patching.

23/170.2 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 – Section 14(1). Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Great Yeldham Road, Toppesfield. Please see the following link <https://one.network/?tm=135030535> to find details of the intended closure of Great Yeldham Road, due to commence on 17th October 2023 for 4 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Anglian Water undertakes new connection.

23/170.3 **Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Section 14(1)**. Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of Braintree Road, Halstead Road, Queen Street, Potter Street, Swan Street, Sible Hedingham. Please see the following link <https://one.network/?tm=135750313> to find details of the intended closure of Braintree Road, Halstead Road, Queen Street, Potter Street, Swan Street, due to commence on 15th January 2024 for 6 days.

The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Essex undertakes machine resurfacing.

23/170.4 Flooding issue from the Green Man barns to the village hall - an ad-hoc jetting service was carried out on 28th September 2023, however this has not solved the issues and this was relayed to Cllr Schwier who has escalated this to Cabinet Highway lead and will update the parish council once a response has been received.

23/171. Planning:

Application No:	Description	Address	Action
23/02423/TPO	Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order No. 14/82 - Prune, tidy up and thin 1 Horse Chestnut Tree	Chapel House The Street Toppesfield CO9 4DJ	Parish council to make comments to Braintree District Council by 25 th October 2023
23/01859/TPOCON	Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: Prune tree back by a 1m. Currently touching roof and cables	The Green Man Church Lane Toppesfield CO9 4DR	Braintree District Council planning decision: Application Granted
23/02022/COUPA	Prior approval for the change of use of agricultural building to a dwellinghouse (Class C3), and for associated operational development - Change of use to 2no. residential dwellings.	Meekings Farm Harrow Hill Toppesfield CO9 4LX	For information only – Decision – Planning Permission required
23/02138/COUPA	Prior approval for the Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to a flexible use within Storage or Distribution (Class B8), Hotels (Class C1), Commercial/Business/Service (Class E), or until the end of July 2022, uses previously classified as Assembly and Leisure (Class D2).	Toppesfield Hall Great Yeldham Road Toppesfield CO9 4LS	For information only – no requirement for comments. Pending Consideration by BDC
23/01698/SCR	Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 - Screening Request (Regulation 6) – Solar Farm	Land Adjacent To Toppesfield Hall Great Yeldham Road Toppesfield	Braintree District Council planning decision: Screening/Scoping Opinion Adopted

Application number 23/02423/TPO was discussed, and no objections were raised.

23/172. Communications:

There have been concerns raised about adding a Parish Council representative to the Community Facebook as it is not associated with the Parish Council. An offer of help to set up a page just for the Parish Council was made. However, it was agreed to continue to post items to the existing village Facebook pages through one of the current administrators.

23/173. Information exchange / Items for the next agenda

There was nothing discussed under this item.

23/174. Date of the next meeting:

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 2nd November 2023 at 7.30pm at Toppesfield Village Hall.

23/175. Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.15pm

Signed:

Dated:

Action Summary:

- Cllrs Bourlet and Smith to progress Christmas event planning.
- Clerk to obtain further quotes for a replacement for the damaged slide and for a stand-alone small slide.
- Clerk to enquire with EALC whether the clerk's salary should increase as a result of gaining the CiLCA Qualification.

Appendix A

Accounts -5th October 2023			£	
Community Account				
	Closing Balance as at 3rd October 2023		£37,400.63	
All previous payments issued balance should be			<u>£28,664.63</u>	
Income Received Included in the balance figure of 03.10.23				
28.09.23	Braintree District Council - 2nd instalment of precept		£8,746.00	
			<u>£8,746.00</u>	
Direct Debits / Payments made since last meeting (included in the balance figure of 03.10.23)				
02.10.23	EDF Energy - The Pavilaion electricity supply		£10.00	
			<u>£10.00</u>	
				Unrecoverable VAT
Payments to be approved:				
Date of invoice		Chq No:		
30.09.23	Poppy Wreath	101969	£25.00	£0.00
19.09.23	Mick Francis - skip hire for landscaping works around the Petanque Court	By Bacs	£198.00	£0.00
28.09.23	BDC Planning Portal - outline planning application	By Bacs	£295.00	£0.00
27.09.23	PKF Littlejohn LLP - Annual Return 2022-2023	By Bacs	£252.00	£0.00
01.10.23	K Berry - September salary	By Bacs	£502.92	£0.00
			<u>£1,272.92</u>	
			£36,127.71	