



Minutes of the Meeting of Great Notley Parish Council Held on Monday 4th January 2016 at the Community Centre Great Notley

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

Those present: Councillors Heady (Chair), Butland, Price, Cunningham, Ricci, Paul, Cooper and the Clerk.

6 members of the public were present.

16/01: Apologies

Received from Councillor Crawford.

16/02: Declarations of Interest

Councillor Butland – non pecuniary interest – member of Braintree District Council and member of the Fire authority.

Councillor Cunningham – non pecuniary interest – member of Braintree District Council.

Councillor Ricci – non pecuniary interest – member of Braintree District Council.

Councillor Paul – non pecuniary interest – member of Braintree District Council.

16/03: Public Question Time

Four members of the public spoke in relation to their concerns regarding cars that have been racing along the A131 late at night and in the early hours of the morning. They were concerned not just in relation to the noise nuisance but also from a safety perspective in view of the number of vehicles involved and the manner in which they are being driven. They confirmed that the police had responded to calls but were concerned that the activity continues and suggested some form of traffic calming to try and stop the activity. It was noted that one resident has raised the issue with the local MP. Councillor Butland was able to confirm that he had ascertained that the Police had come out on a number of occasions and as a result two of the offending vehicles have been crushed. He confirmed that District members could follow up with the Police if residents reported to him in the future that the Police were not responding. Members discussed how best to liaise with the Police on this issue especially as it cuts across the Braintree and Chelmsford Police areas. It was **agreed** that a letter be sent by the Parish Council to the Police supporting the concerns of residents asking them to ensure that the police went back to callers telling them what they had done and requesting feedback as to

how they could be more pro-active in relation to the issue. It was confirmed that the issue of traffic calming measures generally in the Parish is on the agenda to be discussed later in the meeting.

A resident who lives just outside the Parish raised concerns in relation to traffic using London Road. She stated that traffic regularly exceeds the 30mph speed limit and that she has experienced a number of near misses especially near the mini roundabout at the top of Queenborough Lane. She suggested that the road layout by the new petrol station sends traffic directly along the London Road rather than in the direction of the bypass and that some motorists travel along the road at extremely high speeds. She suggested some form of traffic calming such as chicanes or speed cameras. Upon discussing the matter members noted that a number of attempts have been made in the past to try and deal with this issue however they agreed to add this matter into the letter to be sent to the Police and also to consider this issue when considering applications to the Local Highway Panel later in this meeting.

Kieran Moir from the Parish Safety Partnership then addressed the meeting. He explained that the scheme is a collaboration between the Fire Service and the Police. The aim is to recruit local volunteers who will visit residents with advice on home safety and will have the ability to fit smoke alarms. He provided some literature and asked that the Parish Council spread the word about the scheme. It was confirmed that information has already been made available on Facebook. It was suggested that he provide an article for the next edition of the Parish magazine and the Clerk will put the posters on the noticeboards.

16/04: Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 23rd November 2015 & progress update

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2015 were **agreed** by all members as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

16/05: Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported as follows –

On Saturday 19th December, along with fellow councillors and staff and spouses, I attended the annual Torchlight Procession and carol service which was also attended by even more residents than in previous years. All the comments I heard on this were positive and I continue to believe that this adds hugely to our community. I thank in particular Councillor Price who, with our Clerk, worked on this year's arrangements on behalf of the Council. I have written formally to Tesco's and to the NGCA thanking them for their contributions to the success of the event.

I have written to every household in Cut Hedge apologising for the failure of our *Great Notley Times* delivery arrangements over quite a long period. The residents there felt neglected and our Clerk and Tree Warden, Allan John, have worked with a couple of the residents to identify how various matters requiring the attention of public authorities might be seen too. My letter set out action in and around Cut Hedge taken since the delivery oversight was identified.

I have given an oral reference for our clerk on request from the Chairman of Little Waltham Parish Council for a reference following an application for the post of clerk. Suzanne has been successful in her application and starts work there as from 1st January. I have been assured that this appointment will not in any way diminish the attention this Parish Council receives. I am sure you will join me in wishing her well in her endeavours with Little Waltham.

Much of time during December was taken up with personnel issues and in working on draft budget issues. These have been time consuming for both the Clerk and me and will be the subject of reports to you.

I have dealt with an item of casework, a request from a householder for information on a parking issue. Following assistance from the Clerk I confirmed to the householder that on the face of it the matter on which he wanted guidance was a private matter between him and his neighbours.

In addition it was noted that the Chairman has been in correspondence with the Football club to clarify arrangements as a result of staff complaints and to assure the Club that the Parish wished to co-operate with the club to reduce or eliminate any difficulties that residents might experience from the football club's use of the Green.

16/06: Parish Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported as follows –

1. The Civil Aviation Authority have issued the decision on the Stansted Airport Proposal to change more daytime flight routes from the Southern 'Dover' beacon to the Eastern 'Clacton' beacon. The CAA has agreed to the proposal which will take effect from February 2016. I circulated further details to members in November 2015.
2. Further to the street light inspection carried out by Councillors I have reported the various faults to Essex County Council who have acknowledged receipt. In addition one light owned by the Parish Council was not working and repair has been organised.
3. I received a report of damage to the footbridge leading from the footpath to the RAFT and damaged fencing around the RAFT. Braintree District Council arranged to repair the footbridge and also as the damaged fencing was within the shrub line they have removed it to make tidy.
4. Essex County Council has reported back via Councillor Ricci the results of the speed survey along Queenborough Lane and Bridge End Lane. The speeds recorded are within tolerance so no further action will be taken.
5. Essex County Council have confirmed that further to a complaint being lodged regarding the position of a fence at Ennerdale Avenue, the authority consider that the householder has complied with his obligations regarding the reinstatement of a ditch and no further action is required in this regard.

6. Both the Scouts and CAB have sent letters of thanks in relation to the grant funding agreed at the last meeting and asked that this is communicated to members.
7. I have located some information regarding the previous involvement of the Parish Council in the P3 pathway scheme with Essex County Council. I will follow up on this information and report back further at the February 2016 meeting.
8. In relation to outstanding land transfer within the Parish, Braintree District Council have reported to me that the legal department are ready to conclude matters but are not able to obtain any response from Countryside Properties. I subsequently spoke to a representative from Countryside who stated that the intention is to try and resolve this long outstanding matter early in the New Year. I will keep you advised.
9. The NGCA have confirmed that the annual fete will take place on 2nd July 2016 and upon their request I have communicated this to James Cleverly MP with an invitation to the event.
10. I have circulated pre-planning information from Countryside Properties in relation to the potential development of 'Skyline 2'.
It was noted that the Braintree and Witham Times had contacted the Chairman who had indicated that, in view of the site's land use allocation, the submission of a planning application for business premises had been inevitable in due course and not as represented on the newspaper's website. It was agreed that the Parish Council reserve any opinion on proposals at this site once a planning application had been submitted.
11. A fuel card account has now been set up with the RAC and the fuel card is expected imminently for use in relation to the Parish Council van.
12. Finally I am listing some matters where no action is required by the Parish Council but where a response is awaited from others.

Application for a 'warning 'pedestrians' sign on the A131 – the Local Highway Panel are carrying out a feasibility study into having a formal crossing at that point in the road.

The addition of the lights at the Play area adjacent to the Community Centre to the night time lighting scheme by Essex County Council.

The report was **noted** and **accepted**.

16/07: Financial Report

16/07.1 Bank reconciliation

Bank reconciliation figures calculated to 31st December 2015 were presented and **accepted** by all members.

16/07.2 Payments for approval
The following payments were formally **approved** –

2/12/15	102154	Scouts grant	597.00
	102155	Braintree Halstead and Witham CAB grant	500.00
9/12/15	102156	Richard Edwards LLP	90.90
	102157	S Walker Clerk's expenses	25.96
	102158 –		
	102162	Salaries	3,293.79
	102163	HMRC	765.54
	102164	Essex Pension Fund	330.75
13/12/15	Direct Debit	BT	56.91
19/12/15	102165	F Illman (fuel)	20.00
	102166	NGCA	11.00
	102167	J Malam (InCahoots Quintet)	200.00
	102168	Paul Clark Printing (Distribution)	660.00
	102169	Paul Clark Printing	1,670.00
4/1/16	102170	Marks Tey Radio	96.00
	102171	P Heady (expenses)	2.90

16/07.3 Quarterly financial report

The Quarterly financial report calculated to 31st December 2015 was presented together with a progress against budget report and both were **accepted** by all members.

16/08: Other matters for discussion

16/08.1 To agree and set the budget for 2016/17.

Figures were presented by the Clerk together with an up to date report from which it was noted that the Localism fund payment from Braintree District Council will be reduced by 16.21% and will reduce year on year until 2019/20 when payment will cease. The Clerk also provided figures in relation to money raised from adverts in the Great Notley Times and the financial impact of the fees being raised.

Members debated how to increase that source of income and **agreed** not

to increase the advertising rates at this point in time especially as many of the advertisers are small businesses who might cease to advertise if the rates increase. However it was **agreed** that efforts are made to attract new advertisers especially from businesses in the Parish and to reconsider advertising rates again another time.

In relation to the decrease in the Localism payment it was noted that residents have consistently expected the Parish to be maintained to a high standard, higher than if the Parish Council undertook no or only limited litter picking and like activities, and were most unlikely to accept any reduction in that standard: the Parish is classed as a desirable place to live. Thus in order to maintain current services and have sufficient money for the future in view of the decrease in grant and for future projects as listed in the report it was proposed by Councillor Butland to set the precept so that a Band D property pays the sum of £30 per annum, this was seconded by Councillor Ricci and **agreed**. It was noted that for Band D households this would mean an annual increase of £5, less than 10p per week.

It was also **agreed** that in view of ongoing financial pressures consideration will be given over the coming months to ways in which there might be a more effective use of resources and in particular the effective deployment the 73 hours of litter picking resources funded through the precept.

16/08.2 To receive update on RAFT proposals

It was noted that a letter has been received from Braintree District Council noting the result of the youth survey and supporting the stance of the Parish Council in seeking community involvement in the strategy for the future of the RAFT. The Clerk also confirmed that she has obtained the relevant contact details for Groundworks who are able to provide project management skills. She will be contacting them and it was agreed that a report will be submitted at the next meeting.

16/08.3 To discuss insurance claim in relation to the Levens Way Play area and other issues of maintenance of the area.

The Clerk confirmed that an offer of £1,500 has been made by the insurers for Anglian Water in relation to the amenity claim for the play area. Upon discussion it was **agreed** by all members to accept the offer but to make it clear that if the Parish Council has to pursue any future claim against the water company a much higher claim will be made. In addition the Clerk provided photographs of a hole that has formed in the wet pour under the toddler slide. In view of the fact that the hole is not considered to present a current hazard it was **agreed** to take no further action at this point in time.

16/08.4 To agree arrangements for Torchlight Procession 2016

Due to the popularity of this event it was noted that the Community Centre has reached capacity and cannot host additional numbers. The Vice Chair had spoken to the Vicar for the Church of Great Notley who had confirmed in principle that the Church, which has a much larger capacity, would be willing to host the event. Members noted that the aim of this Parish

Council event is that it is inclusive for all residents however it was accepted that in view of the numbers attending the best venue within the Parish would be the Church. It was therefore **agreed** that the event will be booked for 17th December 2016 and will commence at the Community Centre with the carol service taking place at the Church. Councillor Price agreed to again liaise with the Clerk to organise the event.

16/08.5 To consider quotation to paint the gates and for maintenance Equipment

Members **agreed** to accept the quotation from John Slade of £190 to repaint the village entrance gates.

Members discussed the need for a power washer to clean Parish infrastructure including the play areas and it was requested that the Clerk enquire as to options of purchasing or renting a power washer or employing either a company or other authority to carry out the work and report back at the next meeting.

16/08.6 To consider any applications for the Local Highway Panel

Members noted that some highway markings have become faded or are missing and asked that a request is made to reinstate road markings at the Tesco mini roundabout, the Cuckoo Way triangle and the Baker's Lane mini roundabout. In addition it was noted that the roundabout sign at the Tesco mini roundabout is still missing and that a request to be made to reinstate the sign.

Further to earlier discussions with residents in relation to issues on the A131 and London Road it was also **agreed** by members to submit applications to the Local Highway Panel for traffic calming and/or speed reduction measures in those locations.

16/08.7 To receive an update in relation to community projects including access to Cuckoo Wood and possible Community litter pick.

The Clerk reported on the efforts made by the Tree Warden Allan John to secure community access to Cuckoo Wood which has resulted in liaison between Braintree District Council and the Beavers to arrange a coppicing event at the wood. It has also been suggested that a spring walk could be arranged for residents and members **agreed** to support that suggestion which can be publicised in due course in the Great Notley Times.

The Beavers had also requested whether they could participate in a litter pick with the Parish Council however resources do not enable the Parish Council to facilitate that suggestion for the time being.

16/08.8 To consider noticeboard arrangements at the 'Mrs Hedges' site

It was noted that Braintree District Council have advised that the pergola, the 'Mrs Hedges' statue and the noticeboard have been transferred to them by Countryside Properties. The noticeboard is in need of an update and it was considered useful to have an additional Parish Council noticeboard in that location. It was therefore **agreed** to request the District Council for permission for the Parish Council to replace the existing board

with a new Parish Council noticeboard.

16/08.9 To reconsider meeting dates during 2016

An updated list of dates were noted and **agreed**.

16/09: Planning applications, Tree Preservation Orders and other planning matters.

16/09.1 New Planning applications

Application No.	Application	response
15/00383/TPO	Windsmoor, 190 London Road, Great Notley – work to tree covered by Tree Preservation Order	noted as withdrawn
15/01566/FUL	12 Mallard Close, Great Notley – erection of single storey side and rear extension	No comment

In addition it was noted that an application has just been submitted by Essex County Council (reference CC/BTE/75/15) for additional disabled facilities at the County Park and there is no comment in relation to that application.

16/09.2 To Consider the Chelmsford City Council (CCC) proposals in relation to their new Development Plan

The Clerk had previously submitted a report in relation to the proposals together with online links to enable members to consider the proposals. She had also attended an event in relation to the proposals held by Chelmsford City Council at Great Leighs Village Hall.

Members raised concerns as to the impact on schools in the Parish, traffic and infrastructure impact, the impact on other community and social facilities and the apparent presumption by CCC that the Braintree District will absorb the impact of the new housing. It was also noted that in relation to the neighbouring Council's 'development hierarchy' Great Leighs has been classed alongside much larger settlements such as Broomfield and that is not appropriate. Members were also concerned as to the proposed type and quality of the homes which is currently unknown. It was **agreed** that the Chair and the Clerk will put the various concerns raised into a letter of objection to Chelmsford City Council and will also copy the letter to the planners at Braintree District Council.

16/09.3 To consider setting up a Planning Committee

To enable the Parish Council to adequately respond to future planning applications within the appropriate timescales (particularly where there are large gaps of time between meetings) it was **agreed** to set up a planning committee. The terms of reference drafted by the Clerk were approved and **agreed**. It was further agreed that all 8 members of the

Parish Council will be members of that committee.

16/10: Committee Reports

10.1 District/County Update

Councillor Cunningham confirmed that he had responded to a resident in Ellen Way in relation to damage caused by bin lorries and had taken the matter up with Braintree District Council.

16/11: Any Matters to be raised by members for the next agenda

None.

Meeting concluded at 9.08pm

**The next Parish Council meeting is on:
Monday 8th February 2016
7.30pm
The Community Centre, Great Notley**