



Minutes of the Meeting of Great Notley Parish Council Held on 24th July 2023 at the Community Centre Great Notley

Meeting commenced at 7.31pm

Present: Councillors Griffin (Chair), Ricci, Sheppard, Crawford, Cogswell, Pritchard and the Clerk

23/71: Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Cunningham.

23/72: Declarations of Interests

Councillor Ricci declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of Braintree District Council and as a member of the planning committee of that authority.

23/73: To consider and approve Minutes of the Meeting of 12th June 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th June 2023 were **agreed** by Councillors as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23/74: Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

23/75: Reports

23/75.1: Report from County Councillor

None.

23/75.2 Report from District Councillor

Councillor Ricci reported on the forthcoming introduction to charge for the removal of household green waste since the topic has dominated conversation on social media. The initiative has been 'called in' by the opposition and is now in the process of assessing whether it is a viable call in. It was advised that this scheme follows significant financial difficulty faced by the District Council and it was noted that Braintree is one of the few districts which does not already charge for its green waste recycling; 84% of District & Borough Councils charge for green waste removal. Councillors were reminded that the District Council is not mandated to collect green waste as there is no statutory duty to provide this service to residents. Should the scheme go ahead, it will be introduced in 2024/25, with an early bird payment structure offering a discount. The 'call in' process is expected to be dealt with by the end of August.

23/75.3 Report from Councillors attending external meetings

Councillor Ricci attended the recent NGCA meetings, where recognition was given to the Parish Council for the award of the Summer Fete grant.

The Clerk informed Councillors that she had been advised that, unfortunately, an alternative date for the Summer Fete (which did not end up going ahead due to severe weather warnings) could not be agreed and, therefore, the Summer Fete for 2023 could not happen. NGCA has returned the grant money to the Parish Council.

23/76: Parish Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported as follows –

1. The footbridge to the Village Green has now been repaired by Braintree District Council.
2. I am in the process of organising refresher GDPR training for Councillors to take place in September 2023, at a date to be agreed by all.
3. The necessary documentation was sent to PKF Littlejohn LLP on 20th June 2023 for external auditing.
4. The results of Operation Vadar were shared via our Facebook page, with permission from BDC and Essex Police.
5. As you may be aware, the NGCA Summer Fete had to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. A great shame for those involved in the detailed planning. NGCA has advised that the grant fund will be returned to the Parish Council's bank account.
6. I shall be taking annual leave on 7th-11th August (inclusive) and on 25th-29th September (inclusive).
7. Finally, I am listing some ongoing matters where no action is required by the Parish Council but where a response is awaited from others.

Issue	First raised
Transfer of land between developers and Braintree District Council – <i>agreement reached between BDC and Countryside Properties regarding land to be transferred and commuted sum. Only outstanding issue is the future of the Unity Hand sculpture</i>	May 2012
Parish Council application for a 'warning pedestrians sign on A131 adjacent to Astronomer pub – Signage recommended for funding in financial year 2022 – 2023 at an estimated cost of £5,000	January 2015
Tree Strategy for the Parish – await Braintree District Council – detailed response expected summer 2023	July 2019
Application for 20mph speed limit within White Court section of the Parish – feasibility to be undertaken and current listed in the 'awaiting funding' list of the LHP.	July 2020

Local Highway Panel application for tactile paving at Bridge End Lane – Installation of tactile paving, visibility improvements and replacement of the barrier with a bollard is investigated as a package of works for detailed design and works commission. Estimated funding £16,000.00	June 2022
Rewilding scheme – await more information from BDC in 2023/4	October 2022
Tree Warden – voluntary position continues to be advertised	September 2022
Report on electric vehicles – awaited from Braintree District Council	October 2022

The report was **accepted**.

23/77: Financial report

23/77.1 Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation statement calculated to 19th July 2023 was **accepted**.

23/77.2 Payments for approval

The following payments were **approved** –

Direct debits

30/6/23	RAC Allstar fuel card		63.42
23/6/23	Lloyds Card		
	Zoom	15.59	
	One Drive	1.99	
	Monthly fee	<u>3.00</u>	20.58

Online Payments June 2023

Salaries		4,264.41
Clerk	Expenses	51.12
HMRC	Tax and NI	889.14
Essex Pension fund	Pension Contributions	510.19

NGCA	hall hire	11.00
Perspective Landscapes	Grass Cutting (3 rd & 17 th May)	144.00
EALC	Training	336.00
EALC	Local Council Award Scheme	120.00
AJ Gallagher	Parish Council Insurance	2,171.33
NGCA	Summer Fete Grant	1800.00
A C Wood	Internal Audit Fee	190.00
Myers Scott Ltd	Website Admin Fees	21.00
BALC	Subscription	48.00
D.Griffin	Reimbursement of Green Flag Renewal	95.00
Holmes & Hill	Supply of Legal Services	672.00
Unity Trust	Service Charge (Quarterly)	26.00

Payments to be made in July/August 2023

Paul Clark Printing	Printing of GNT	1603.00
NGCA	Hall Hire	11.00
Braintree District Council	Operation Services (New Bin Installed)	355.84
Perspective Landscapes	Grass Cutting (2 nd , 16 th & 30 th June)	216.00
Clerk	Expenses (Phone, refreshments for meeting, mileage)	25.06
NPower	Street Lighting	208.79
Royal Mail	Door to Door Delivery (GNT)	328.67
Steve Pearman	Expenses (Van Clean)	30.00
Richard Edwards	Payroll Services	181.20
Quest Motor Group	Van MOT Test	54.85

23/78 Substantive Matters for Consideration

23/78.1 To consider the suggested changes to current Council business

23/78.1.1 To approve the cost of a PO Box for the Parish Council

The need for a PO Box, which will assist with business continuity in the event of a change to Council Clerk, was **approved**. The PO Box Deliver (12 mths) option was **approved**.

Action: Clerk

23/78.1.2 To consider the proposed increase in charges for advertisements in the Great Notley Times magazine

The Clerk advised Councillors that each edition of the GNT magazine incurs a significant sum to the Council, with the remuneration for advertising not covering costs as they were intended to do. For this reason, the Clerk put forward some suggested increases to the costs for future advertising in the magazine. However, following comparisons with similar local PC magazines, it was noted that our current charges were already higher than others.

Councillors discussed the merit of the magazine, particularly for those who do not have access to social media and those who are not computer literate. The Clerk advised that she had made some enquiries with Community Ad, a company who offer their services to other Parish Councils. Sadly, Community Ad were unable to offer the Parish Council production of its own magazine as it already publishes a separate, generic magazine within the locality.

It was **agreed** by Councillors that the Council should retain the status quo for the time being, with a view to reviewing the matter around precept/budget time. In the meantime, feedback will be sought from residents regarding their views of the value of a hardcopy magazine in the October edition.

Action: Clerk

23/78.2 To consider changes to the Parish Council's Facebook

The Clerk advised Councillors the current settings for the facebook page were public, meaning that content was open for anyone to view without being a member of the page. Changing the setting to private would be a permanent change. After some discussion, it was **accepted** that the page would remain public and that adverts for local businesses would not be accepted.

23/78.3 To consider the email from a resident regarding the Village Green
Councillors agreed that this was a matter for Braintree District Council since the land is owned & maintained by them.

Action: Clerk

23/78.4 To consider the quote for maintenance of Leven's Way Play Park

The Clerk advised that, although three quotes were sought for the works from different companies, only 1 quote had been provided for consideration (Mortimer Contracts). Wicksteed Play had responded advising they were not able to replace equipment which had not been installed by them and that it had been noted that all Wicksteed installed equipment had a low risk rating. Online Playgrounds had failed to respond, despite several attempts by the Clerk.

Councillor Crawford reminded Councillors that he carries out weekly visual checks to the site and, to his mind, he is not convinced that any of the work set out in the annual inspection report requires immediate attention. The Clerk advised that almost of the work quoted for was deemed a medium risk by Seagrave Inspection and expressed her concerns that failure to repair/replace the equipment could invalidate the insurance policy in the event of a claim.

Councillors unanimously **agreed** that the insurance policy should be checked to understand the company's appetite for risk and to better understand to what extent our indemnity would fail to cover a claim. The matter must be reconsidered at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

23/79 Update on the matter of Allotments

The Chairman advised that the recent Allotments Project Group meeting had not been particularly productive and that no real progress had been made. The only key decision which had been made was that the ground highlighted for consideration (by the Community Centre, next to the play park) had been deemed unsuitable by the Parish Council and Braintree District Council. It was noted that no future date for the project date had been set by BDC.

It was **agreed** that BDC should be reminded that allotments had been promised to the Parish as part of its 'master plan' for Great Notley and that it ought to fulfil its obligation to residents.

Action: Clerk

23/80 Planning applications, Tree Preservation Orders and other planning matters

23/80.1 New Planning Applications

Councillor Ricci left the room.

The erection of a single storey rear extension on 18 Grantham Avenue was **noted**.

The erection of 1 building split between 2 units at Horizon 120 Business Park was **noted**.

Application No.	Application	Representations
23/01677/TPO	61 Windermere Drive Great Notley – Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO - Reference: 11/2010 3No. Oak trees - 2 meter canopy reduction	No objections
23/01818/SCR	Town and Country Planning Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 SI 2017/571 Screening Opinion Proposal on 13.75ha of land to the west of the existing Horizon 120 Business Park to provide up to 55,000sqm of floor space for Research and Development, and or Industrial processes, and/or B2 (General Industrial), and or B8 Storage or Distribution – Screening Opinion Proposal, comments are welcomed by 30th July	Object to impact on traffic in the area and object to the planned use as an industrial site and/or storage & distribution

23/80.2 To note results of planning applications

The following results were **noted** -

Application No.	Application	Result

23/00800/FUL	Gene House Queenborough Lane Great Notley – Erection of Side Extension	Granted
23/00688/FUL	1 Turing Court London Road Great Notley – Retention of Pallet Store Shed	Granted

23/81: To consider any matters to be raised for next agenda
Allotments and Leven’s Way Play Park.

23/82: Chairman to close the meeting
Meeting concluded 8.40pm