



Minutes of the Great Notley Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th March 2024 at the Community Centre Great Notley

Meeting commenced at 7.34pm

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

Also in attendance were representatives from: NGCA, 1st Great Notley Scouts, WINGs, GN Tesco, Essex Fire & Rescue Service and Essex Police

In the absence of the Chairman, it was **agreed** that the Vice Chairman is acting Chair for the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Received from Councillors Griffin, Butland and Cunningham.

2. **To approve the Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 6th March 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2023 were **agreed** by Councillors as a correct record and signed by the Acting Chair.

3. **To receive reports from Parish organisations and groups.**

The Acting Chair welcomed all representatives to the Annual Parish Meeting and thanked them for giving up their time to attend and present.

Representatives were then invited to give their reports to the Council.

- A representative from NGCA explained that the charity is set up to run and administer the Community Centre and that existing members have been in post for some time, though they are actively seeking to appoint a new Chair and Treasurer (currently filled on a temporary basis). The current climate and indeed Covid has increased financial pressure for the charity after seeing many outgoing costs raised significantly. The hall has approximately 24 regular hirers per week, covering all age groups. Most existing hirers have increased their usage, which has helped but there remains limited availability for hall hire. NGCA continues to support Happy Hill with hall hire and facilities. A weekly toddler group for local parents is held once a week

and NGCA continues to support the well-regarded Ducklings pre-school. There are plans to launch a Repair Café within NGCA and the hall also accommodates private party hire at weekends. The main hall floor has been resealed and sanded, possibly for the last time and it is expected that much more costly work will be needed in 3 years' time. With the assistance of Braintree District Council, the car parks and surrounding footpaths have been re-tarmacked. Last year's Village Fete was sadly cancelled due to high winds and poor weather conditions, with all fees returned to stall holders and vendors. A loss of approximately £700 to NGCA was reported. This year's Summer Fete is scheduled for 13th July 2024 and planning is well underway. NGCA also supported the Ducklings' end of year party in 2023, as well as the Remembrance Sunday service for the village and the Christmas Carols Around the Tree. A recent meeting with White Court School has proved worthwhile, with the school keen to be involved in future community events.

- Another representative for NGCA then presented on the plans for the launch of the Repair Café and confirmed that the project is fast gaining momentum, with a proposal having been submitted to Councillor Ricci. It was explained that repair cafes are a useful resource, providing an otherwise gap between broken household gadgets and landfill. It was heard that a similar repair café operates successfully in Black Notley and the project for Great Notley is planned for possibly 1, 2 or 3 times mid-week. It is hoped that by holding mid-week sessions, rather than weekend, the added footfall from Ducklings pre-school and surrounding primary schools may contribute to its success. The premise of a repair café is that it is donations-based and hot drinks are usually provided (this is hopefully with the kind assistance of the WI). Community Agents (Wellbeing Service) has also offered some interest in the project. The start date for the project is dependant on funding though April is the anticipated date. Councillor Ricci invited NGCA to email himself and Councillors Butland & Cunningham regarding a possible use of Councillors' Community Grants. When questioned what was likely to happen with any donations received, it was explained that donations would contribute to running costs (spare parts, sundries and tools), with any surplus expected to be split between NGCA and another charity (not disclosed). Volunteers are needed to get the project off the ground and a call for those interested to contact NGCA for more information. Councillor Ricci and the Clerk agreed to a half page article in the June 2024 Great Notley Times to highlight the project as well as social media exposure on the GNPC Facebook page.
- A representative from WINGs informed the Council that averagely 32-33 members attend per meeting and that it operates many clubs including 'knitter natter', book, film and craft. In December 2023, WINGs knitted multiple green hats for the Church Christmas Tree decorations and these were later distributed out to individuals. Many speakers attend their

meetings and various speakers are booked for the rest of the year; most recently a speaker from Essex Wildlife Photography presented a talk to them. WINGS continues to be actively involved with the village Remembrance Sunday service and the Christmas Carols Around the Tree, as well as providing a Pimm's stall at the Summer Fete. Members recently hand-knitted green hearts for the village sign in reference to climate change and this has already been well-received by residents. Councillor Ricci thanked the WI for its commitment to providing decorations for the village.

- A representative for 1st Great Notley Scouts informed that 'squirrels' have now been added to the Scouting groups with children from aged 4 allowed to join. They also have Beavers, Cubs and Scouts groups and approximately 100 children are split between this division and Great Leighs. Camping trips are offered to children and fundraising activities regularly take place to raise much-needed funds for planned trips. BBQ's are typically provided by this division at community events, such as the Summer Fete and Carols Around the Tree, which also helps to raise funds. Many other community events are supported by Scouts, not least their involvement with the Remembrance Sunday service. Councillor Ricci thanked the Scouts for their continued support.
- A representative from Great Notley Tesco advised that their community role is to provide both financial and voluntary support, and representation is often found at various community events. Financial donations are made to worthy causes, including local fundraisers and a blue token system exists in stores for raising much needed funds for local pre-schools and schools. Support from GN Tesco is regularly given to key events such as the village Remembrance Sunday service, Summer Fete and a number of Macmillan coffee mornings held at schools. A community bookstand is also in operation in store and this initiative seems to be popular among residents. An Xbox was also recently donated to a Children's ward at Broomfield Hospital and GN Tesco continues to support Children and Young People in various ways, including often providing activities such as chalk play and refreshments outside of the store during the holidays. An Easter Egg appeal is being set up for Care Homes and the recent Christmas Present appeal was a huge success, with overwhelming support from residents. GN Tesco continues to consider other projects to support and applications are always welcomed.
- A representative from the Essex Fire & Rescue Service presented to the Council and explained that it covers the whole of the North West. Their service of 'home safety visits' was highlighted and the Council was informed that smoke alarms are provided and fitted free of charge to any households

requiring them. All smoke alarms fitted carry a 10 year warranty and sensory smoke alarms are also provided and fitted free of charge to those with any sensory impairments. Hardwired smoke alarms are not included in this service. Other talks to Home Carers are also provided and all safety talks last for approximately 30-45 minutes. Flyers were left for display at the Community Centre and the Clerk agreed to circulate information via the Council's Facebook page. Councillor Ricci asserted that the service is well-regarded by residents and, often, people are more encouraged to receive safety guidance from Fire Experts than the Police.

- A representative from Essex Police gave 3 handouts to the Council which compared criminal activity in the last period (Jan-Dec 2022) to the current period (Jan-Dec 2023) and which compares Great Notley to other areas within the District. Whilst there has been a notable decrease in crime, it is expected that this is as a result of failing to report those crimes to the Police. Residents are therefore continually encouraged to report all crimes, regardless of expected intervention or outcome. All data is used to help support applications for future funding and allow the Police to profile-build, so the reporting of all crimes is much needed for a variety of reasons, including crime prevention. Anti-Social Behaviour continues to be a key category for the Police Service and Operation Vadar is dedicated to the prevention of race-meets locally, with two vehicles having recently been seized. Current statistics for Operation Vadar will be provided to the Clerk for circulation to residents. Dispersal Powers are sometimes used to deter big meets and residents are encouraged to continue to report all anti-social behaviour, including illegal racing, with as much information including dates, times and specific locations as possible. Councillor Ricci thanked Essex Police for their continued perseverance and for attending Council meetings to provide updates.

Councillor Ricci extended his thanks, on behalf of the Council, once again for their attendance and for their detailed contributions.

4. The Parish Council Chairman's report for the year

The report can be viewed on the Parish Council website and in the Spring '24 edition of the Great Notley Times magazine.

5. District Councillor report

Councillor Ricci reminded residents that the Council is fortunate to have all three Councillors (Butland, Cunningham and himself) as members of the Parish Council and he stated that other Parish Councils would consider themselves privileged to have such a solid and supportive community as ours.

6. County Councillor report

Councillor Butland is the County Councillor for the Parish and continues to attend meetings to provide regular updates on wider contributing issues such as those relating to Essex Highways and other County matters.

7. Any other matters raised by residents

None.

Meeting concluded at 8.24pm

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