



**Minutes of the Meeting of Great Notley Parish Council held on 29th
April 2024 at the Community Centre Great Notley**

Meeting commenced at 7.29pm

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

1 Member of the Public was present for PQT

24/34: Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Crawford and were accepted by the Council.

24/35: Declarations of Interests

Councillor Butland declared an interest as a member of Braintree District Council and Essex County Council. Councillor Cunningham declared an interest as a member of Braintree District Council and Essex County Council. Councillor Ricci declared an interest as a member of Braintree District Council's Planning Committee.

24/36: To consider and approve Minutes of the Meeting of 4th March 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2024 were **agreed** by Councillors as a correct record, proposed by Councillor Pritchard and seconded by Councillor Sheppard, and the minutes were signed by the Chairman.

24/37: Public Question Time

The member of the public asked for agenda item 24/41.2 (Allotments) to be taken at this time as he wished to speak on the matter. The Chairman agreed to move the agenda to accommodate. The Clerk briefly summarised the analysis of responses presented to the Council (the member of the public was provided with a copy at the start of the meeting), following an email sent in February 2024 to all those currently on the allotments waiting list living in the village. The email made enquiries, on behalf of the Council, regarding the possibility of exploring a site outside of the village. This option was being considered following the ongoing difficulties faced by the Parish Council in securing suitable land from the District Council within the village. Councillors heard that 44 residents had been contacted by the Clerk by email and 29 responses were received. Whilst some residents were willing to consider a short drive to an allotments site, it was clear from responses that many were not and that the notion did not fall within the spirit of allotments. The member of the public spoke of his frustration that Braintree District Council has not fulfilled its statutory duty

and that this matter remains unresolved. The Chairman reassured him that the Parish Council has continued its efforts to put pressure on the District Council to fulfil its obligations but that many factors have contributed to a suitable site not being allocated. Councillors explained to the member of the public that the initial site at Skyline was deemed unsuitable for use following extensive geological surveys which determined that the soil was contaminated. The member of the public remarked that he had not been aware of this and accepted that this would have contributed to the delay and difficulty in finding an alternative site, particularly with limited options available. Councillor Ricci assured the member of the public that he is a keen advocate when discussing allotment matters with Officers at the District Council. The member of the public referenced the District Council's current review of its Local Plan and, in particular, the 'Call for Sites' and questioned whether consideration could be given to a site located on the other side of London Road. Councillor Ricci agreed that this option could be explored further to better understand the logistics, including whether the site would fall under the ward of Black Notley. Equally, he committed to exploring whether any provisions could be made under Phase 2 of the Horizon 120 development, managed privately by The Marshgate Group, including investigating whether any s106 allocation could be used. It was agreed that Councillor Ricci would report back to the Council and the Clerk would report his findings back to the member of the public in due course.

Action: Councillor Ricci and the Clerk

24/38: Reports

24/38.1: Report from County Councillor

Councillor Butland attended a recent meeting of the Local Highways Panel. Three matters which were discussed were of interest to this Parish Council and these were 'Funded Schemes for 2023/24' (completed) and 'Funded Schemes for 2024/25' (awaiting completion). The former being the installation of tactile paving and bollards at Bridge End Lane, which has been confirmed as completed. The latter – Funded Schemes for 2024/25 – covering the other two matters, comprising a) signage at the A131 by the Astronomer public house warning 'pedestrians crossing' and b) the requested 20 mph speed limit into Windermere Drive near to White Court School. The signage on the A131 has been costed at an estimated £11,500 and implementation has been budgeted for this year. Consideration of the 20mph speed limit continues, though validation results have determined that it could require CMA (Cabinet Member Action) / TRL (Traffic Regulator Order). Councillor Butland advised that, given this is the only residential area where 30mph is currently permitted, drivers would, in theory, be expected to speed up, which seems counterintuitive, and indeed dangerous, next to a primary school. It was suggested to Councillor Butland that the Parish Council may be asked for a contribution to costs, should the 20mph reduction be implemented.

24/38.2: Report from District Councillor

Councillors Cunningham and Ricci confirmed that they did not have any reports to provide at this meeting.

24/38.3: Reports from Councillors attending External Meetings

The Chairman confirmed that she had attended a recent BALC meeting, at which the new Green Waste Collection and unallocated s106 money were hot topics. Anecdotal reports of issues with failed collections and stolen permits were shared. Councillor Cunningham addressed these issues in response, confirming that overall, the roll-out of the scheme had been successful. Similarly, Councillor Butland addressed the concerns relating to unallocated s106 money by explaining that it has recently been minuted by the District Council that millions of pounds have been paid out to Parishes under s106.

The Chairman also advised that she attended an NGCA Committee meeting last week, at which the future operational responsibility of the Association was discussed.

24/39: Parish Clerk's Report

1. The white gates at Bridge End Lane have now been repaired and repainted by the company approved by the Council in December 2023. The work carried out has enabled the Council to retain the current gates for a few more years, subject to ongoing yearly maintenance. I am pleased that this resulted in a cost saving to the Council.
2. The Internal Audit inspection is scheduled for 8th May and I will be meeting with the IA in person to review all the requisite documentation, to satisfy the first step of the 'Annual Governance and Accountability Return' for financial year 2023-24.
3. The Solicitors Firm acting for Tesco in respect of our claim for compensation has not replied to my last email sent on 21st March in which I confirmed that we did not have any video footage of the damage being done. Only CCTV still images were provided. I have sent an email chasing an update and will now pass the matter back to the District Council for them to pursue.
4. I attended an Audits course on 22nd March 2024 with EALC. At the course, it was confirmed to me by the trainer that 1 Councillor reviewing monthly statements and invoices for financial control was not sufficient and that it is best practice to have 2 Councillors conducting a monthly review.
5. The Chairman and I met the Head of White Court School in March to enhance communication between the Council and the School. We are hopeful that WC Primary School will take an active role, where possible, in future community events.
6. An application has now been completed and submitted to Nationwide for its 1 Year Business Savings Account. I shall inform you when the account is live and we are able to transfer funds to it. In the meantime, the agreed sum has been transferred from Unity to Saffron to bring the Unity account within the protected limitation.
7. The first instalment of the Precept for 2024-25 will be paid by the District Council on 25th April 2024.
8. BDC confirmed on 4th April the village green has now been verti-drained as planned.
9. I am scheduled to have my annual appraisal on 23rd April 2024 with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.

Issue	First raised	Comment
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	Ongoing

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	Cllr Butland to advise if there is an update
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	Cllr Butland to advise if there is an update
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	
Tree Warden – voluntary position continues to be advertised	September 2022	Clerk readvertised recently via Facebook.
Report on electric vehicles – awaited from Braintree District Council	October 2022	

The report was **accepted**.

24/40: Financial Matters

24/40.1: Bank Reconciliations

The bank reconciliations calculated to 31st March 2024 were **accepted**.

24/40.2: Payments for Approval

Councillor Ricci proposed to approve the payments, which was seconded by Councillor Butland and the following payments were **approved** –

Direct debits

14/03/24	RAC All Star (Fuel Card)	68.39
25/03/24	<u>Lloyds Card</u>	
	Tesco(Refreshments for APM) 25.63*	
	Microsoft 1.99	
	Monthly fee <u>3.00</u>	30.62

Online Payments March 2024

Salaries		4,355.73
Essex Pension fund	Pension Contributions	1,191.14
HMRC Cumbernauld	November Tax and NI Contributions	815.79
NGCA	February Hall Hire	13.00
Myers Scott Ltd	Website Hosting & Maintenance	103.19
Seagrave Inspections Ltd	February Operational Inspection	156.00
EALC	Clerk Training (22 nd March)	114.00
Clerk	Expenses	16.12
Unity Bank	Quarterly Service Charge	25.95
Unity Bank	Manual Credit Handling Charge	0.50
Saffron Building Society	Transfer of Reserve Funds	30,000

Payments made/to be made in April 2024

RAC All Star	Van Fuel Card	61.17
Lloyds Credit Card	Monthly Payment	4.99
True Colours	White Gates Repair & Repaint	950.00
NPower	Street Lighting	381.06
ICO	Annual Data Protection Fee	40.00**
EALC	EALC/NALC Affiliation Fees	1,021.47
NGCA	March Hall Hire	13.00
Rialtas Business Solutions	Alpha Software Set Up & Support	786.20
Richard Edwards Group	Payroll Processing Jan – March 2024	169.20
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd	PPE	21.96
Amazon	Cork Tiles (for backing 1 PC notice board)	14.95

***Power to spend LGA 1972, S137 – Refreshments for the Annual Parish Meeting 2024 for Electors**

****This Data Protection Fee payment is expected either in April or May 2024**

24/40.3: To review and approve the list of Regular Payments for 2024/25 and to appoint the RFO for 2024/25

With reference to financial regulations 1.8 and 5.6 the following list of regular payments and appointment of RFO for 2024/25 were proposed by Councillor Butland, seconded by Councillor Cunningham and **approved –**

Payee	Reason for payment	Frequency
All employees	Salaries and expenses	Monthly
HMRC	Employees tax and NI	Monthly
Essex Pension fund	Employees pension provision	Monthly
NGCA	Hall hire	Monthly
Lloyds	Business Credit Card	Monthly
Allstar fuel card	Fuel for van	Approximately monthly
NPower	Electricity for streetlights	Quarterly
Richard Edwards LLP	External payroll	Quarterly
Seagrave Inspections	Play area inspections	Quarterly
Paul Clark Printing	Printing of magazines	3 times a year
Vision Magazine	Distribution of magazine	3 times a year
Unity Trust bank	Service charge fees	Quarterly
Mr Willett	Production of Great Notley Times	3 times a year
Perspective Landscapes	Grass cutting	Ad hoc during summer months
EALC/NALC	Affiliation Fees	Annually
APlan insurance	Vehicle insurance	Annually
Green Flag	Vehicle Recovery	Annually
Information Commissioner	Data Protection Registration fee	Annually

Myers Scott Ltd	Subscriptions for website domain and SSL certificate and ad hoc assistance	Annually
Quest Motors	Annual van service and MOT	Annually
Rialtas	Accountancy Software	Annually
A&J Lighting Solutions	Street light repair	Ad hoc when required
EALC	Clerk & Councillor Training	Ad hoc when required
Chelmsford Safety	PPE	Ad hoc when required
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd	PPE	Ad hoc when required
JC Electricals	Smoke Alarms / other electrical repairs as needed	Ad hoc when required
Viking Direct	Stationery	Ad hoc when required

The Clerk was appointed RFO (Responsible Financial Officer) for 2024/25.

24/40.4: To consider and approve the Payroll Charges for 2024/25

Councillor Ricci proposed to approve the payroll charges, which was seconded by Councillor Sheppard and they were **approved**.

24/40.5: To consider and approve the Strategy Statement for 2024/25

Councillor Cogswell queried why, if the statement suggests that Phase 2 of the RAFT has been suspended, we have an earmarked reserve of £30k for that project. The Clerk explained that the budget drafting for 2024/25 and subsequent approval process occurred prior to agreement to suspend Phase 2 and that a change to earmarked reserves could be agreed at any point in the year, if necessary. Councillor Butland advised that Finchingfield Parish Council is currently undertaking a small expansion of its skate area and that it could be beneficial for the Clerk to make contact with its Parish Council Clerk for further advice.

Councillor Cunningham proposed to approve the Strategy Statement for 2024/25, which was seconded by Councillor Cogswell and this was **approved**.

Action: The Clerk

24/40.6: To consider and approve the Internal Control Procedures for 2024/25

Specific reference was made to the last point (8) which confirms that two Councillors will be appointed in the role of monthly internal auditing of accounts and invoices. Councillor Butland confirmed that he would join Councillor Cogswell to become the second nominated Councillor to fulfil this requirement.

Councillor Ricci proposed to approve the Internal Control Procedures for 2024/25, which was seconded by Councillor Pritchard and these were **approved** by the Council.

24/41: Substantive Matters for Consideration

24/41.1 To consider quotations for repairs to Levens Way Play Park

Three quotations were presented to the Council and these were from Mortimer Contracts, Playground Supplies Ltd and Reids Playground Maintenance Ltd. The Clerk advised that Wicksteed Play had stated they were unable to quote for the work because some of the equipment in need of repair was not supplied by them). Councillors agreed that Playground Supplies Ltd should not be awarded the work because they had advised they could not replace the net on the activity climber (one of the items in need of replacement). Councillor Cunningham proposed to appoint Mortimer Contracts, which was seconded by Councillor Ricci and this was **approved** by the Council. The quotation for works totals £1,480+VAT.

Action: The Clerk

24/41.2 To consider the analysis of responses regarding Allotments

This item was taken under Public Question Time.

24/41.3 To approve the draft Maintenance Register for the Storage Units

Councillors unanimously **approved** the draft maintenance register prepared by the Clerk for use of the Council's Storage Units.

Action: The Clerk

24/41.4 To consider a Grant Application from NGCA for setting up a Repair Café

A grant application submitted by NGCA to establish a 'Braintree Repair Café' was considered. A request of £750.00 to contribute towards initial start-up costs (of £802.70) was made. Councillor Ricci remarked that he was in full support of this venture and this application. Councillor Cunningham proposed to award the grant to NGCA, which was seconded by Councillor Cogswell and the application was **approved**.

Action: The Clerk

24/41.5 To consider BDC's Community Infrastructure Grant to replace the Council's Street Lamp Heads

The Clerk advised that the Community Infrastructure Grant was available to Parsh Councils to apply for a maximum £10k per project. The scheme is open until Mid-June and applicants must demonstrate a carbon reduction of at least 5% to qualify. It was suggested that this scheme could be used for updating the Parish Council-owned Street Lighting to LED Lamp Heads. The Clerk explained

that she had applied in February to Essex County Council for some second-hand LED Lamp Heads, which were being offered to Parish Councils free of charge but that she had not heard back from ECC, despite several attempts to chase. Councillors unanimously agreed that the Clerk should submit an application for a grant to BDC. In the meantime, the Clerk should formally request that the County Councillor representative follows up the ongoing matter with ECC.

Whilst discussing street lighting, the Chairman referred to the damaged post on Cuckoo Way, which is left angled towards pedestrians on the nearby footpath. Councillors acknowledged that the post had been taped up and secured by Essex Highways shortly after the damage had been made; however; that was some weeks ago now and nothing else has been done. Councillor Butland said he would see what could be done to progress the matter.

Action: The Clerk and Councillor Butland

24/41.6 To consider BDC's email regarding a 'Call for Sites'

The Clerk advised that a 'Call for Sites' had been issued by BDC as part of a review of its Local Plan. The email was noted.

24/41.7 To consider the email regarding a 'Essex Rural Village of the Year' award

The Clerk informed Councillors that there was an opportunity for the Council to apply for an award under the 'Essex Rural Village of the Year' initiative, specifically relating to examples of community engagement and spirit. Councillors agreed that Great Notley does offer many opportunities for the community collaboratively and that it might be worth speaking with some of the other community groups, such as the WI and Scouts.

When mentioning the WI, the Chairman advised that the group had suggested that the Parish Council may wish to consider refurbishing the Great Notley wooden post on the grass verge at the duck pond. Councillors requested that the Clerk asks the contractor 'True Colours' to quote for refurbishment works. Likewise, the composite village white gate at Tesco was discussed. It was agreed that the gate could do with a clean and Councillors requested the Clerk to ask the Litter Team to carry out the clean, subject to suitable Hi-Vis PPE being made available.

Action: The Clerk

24/42: Planning applications, Tree Preservation Orders and other planning matters

The following applications were noted as those with deadlines that occurred prior to this meeting:

- 24/00469/VAR - Gene House Queenborough Lane Great Notley Essex CM77 7AG Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) of approved application 23/00800/FUL granted 20.06.2023 for "Erection of side extension." Variation would allow reduction of roof height by way of revised drawing 22170/004 A – **Pending Consideration by BDC**

- 24/00422/HH - 8 Draymans Grove Great Notley Essex CM77 7GY
Single storey rear extension – **Application was granted by BDC Planning Committee**
- 23/02086/FUL - Electric Sub Station 30M From KFC Braintree Road Cressing CM77 8GA
Proposed underground cables and associated works on land between Blackley Road, east of Willows Green and Braintree Substation (B1018) – **Application was granted by BDC Planning Committee**
- 24/00580/HH - 2 Carpenters Drive Great Notley Essex CM77 7ZQ
Erection of a single storey rear extension – **Pending Consideration by BDC**
- 23/02807/OUT - Land West of Horizon 120 Phase 2 Horizon Boulevard Great Notley Braintree Essex
Hybrid Planning application for part full, part outline consent for up to 55,000sqm of employment floorspace – **Pending Consideration by BDC**
- 24/00673/TPO - 76 Skiddaw Close Great Notley Essex CM77 7UR
Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO - 10/10 G4-Removal of Ash and Pine tree – **Pending Consideration by BDC**
- 24/00744/PLD - 5 Wood Way Great Notley Essex CM77 7JS
Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development, Single storey rear extension – **No comments sought**
- PID 950163 – Review of Adopted Chelmsford City Council Local Plan
Notice of next stage
- Steeple Bumpstead Neighbourhood Plan – **Application submitted to BDC**

24/42.1: New Applications within the Parish

Councillor Ricci left the room for this item.

Application No.	Application	Representations
24/00690/FUL	The Barley Barn Slamseys Farm Blackley Lane Great Notley Essex CM77 8QF - Conversion & extension of commercial barn (class E(c)(iii) to 1 No. dwelling (class C3) & demolition of industrial building	<p>Council is aware of the importance and historical significance of the group of buildings, which is underlined by the Built Heritage Advice letter dated 16/04/2024 from Essex County Council Place Services. Council agrees that it is important to keep the overall scheme of buildings.</p> <p>Council accepts that a change of use of the Barley Barn to residential would be acceptable, and that any development could properly take place within its current footprint. The demolition of the industrial building (a</p>

		modern detached barn) will also be acceptable. However, Council supports and adopts the recommendation of the report that the proposed new extension would detract from the Grade II listed Barley Barn, and wishes to enter an objection to that development.
24/00442/FUL	Plot 5 Horizon 120 Business Park London Road Braintree Essex - Erection of an employment building comprising of uses falling within Use Classes E(g)(i, ii, iii) and B8 (or a combination of those uses) with associated access, service areas, parking and landscaping.	No objection – in keeping with the rest of the plans

24/42.2: To note results of planning applications

The following results were **noted** -

Application No.	Application	Result
23/02765/FUL	1 Turing Court Great Notley Braintree Essex CM77 7AT - Change of use from and collection of medical/ disability aids from the existing Display Area	Application Granted
23/02851/TPO	80 Skiddaw Close Great Notley Essex CM77 7UR - Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO	Application Granted

23/02551/TPO	83 Windermere Drive Great Notley Essex CM77 7UB - Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO	Remains 'Pending Consideration'
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24/43: Matters to be raised for next meeting

Councillor Ricci returned to the room.

- Zebra Crossing at White Court School (Councillor Ricci – following request of local MP)
- Signage (ducks) at pond by Notley Green School
- Replacement signage for Levens Way Play Park and the RAFT

24/44: Chairman to close the meeting

The meeting was closed at 8.45pm.