



**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Great Notley Parish Council held on
2nd September 2024 at the Community Centre Great Notley**

Meeting commenced at 7.29pm

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

Also present for PQT: Neil Parkinson and Ken Yap, representing NGCA.

24/82: Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Sheppard.

24/83: Declarations of Interest

Councillors Butland and 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 and its Planning Committee.

**24/84: To consider and approve the Minutes of the meeting held on
15th July 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2024 were **agreed** by Councillors as a correct record, proposed by Councillor Ricci and seconded by Councillor Pritchard, and the minutes were signed by the Chairman.

24/85: Public Question Time

Both representatives from NGCA attended to discuss the future billing arrangements for the electricity usage within the Council's Storage Units, after the Council initiated enquiries regarding the purchase of an electric utility vehicle, with the intention of storing & charging the vehicle in the unit overnight. Neil Parkinson made it clear that, whilst NGCA currently covers the nominal cost of electricity in exchange for litter clearance around the community hall, it would not be willing to cover the cost of any increased electricity charges and would expect the Parish Council to provide remuneration for any increased costs. It was confirmed to Neil and Ken that there was never any expectation that NGCA should bear the cost of any increased charges; rather, that NGCA had been contacted to discuss the best approach going forward. The Clerk confirmed that a quote to install a meter in the units had been obtained from an electrician, which would measure the electricity usage. Ken suggested that the Council may wish to consider installing a meter with a timed switch which would restrict the supply to night-time, which is when the vehicle will be charging. The Council

was informed that a meter with a timed switch would be £400 in total. Councillors thanks Neil and Ken for attending.

24/86: Reports

24/86.1: Report from County Councillor

Councillor Butland reported that, during the month of August, the village had seen substantial growth in vegetation, and that the County Council had very recently started cropping some hedges and trees in the locality, for which it is responsible, including Great Notley Avenue and alongside some pathways. However, some overgrown hedges reported by residents are in fact residents' responsibility as they are on private land not owned by either Authority. It was also reported that the roundabout near Panners has now also been resurfaced. A complaint from a resident in Petworth Close regarding anti-social behaviour remains ongoing, though it was noted that no report of ASB has been made to the police for that area.

24/86.2: Report from District Councillor

Councillor Ricci advised that the District Council's deadline for the review of its Local Plan has been extended due to recent changes in Central Government, with the deadline extended to December 2026. The extension will allow for further consultation by the District Council; however, there will be no further call for sites. The proposed sites already received would accommodate an 130k additional houses, whilst only 10k additional houses are actually required. Further information will be shared with Town & Parish Councils in due course.

24/86.3: Reports from Councillors attending external meetings

Councillor Crawford reminded the Council that the Patient Participation Group is holding a workshop with all surgeries on 24th September at 6.30pm and all Councillors are invited to attend.

24/87: Parish Clerk's Report

1. I am very pleased to report that the Council's application for a Community Infrastructure Grant from the District Council was successful. The funding will be used to replace the Parish Council owned street lamp heads with LED lamp heads in a bid to reduce carbon and be more cost efficient.
2. During the summer, I have fielded numerous complaints from residents, both via social media and by email, regarding the overgrown vegetation around the village. I reported all of these to both BDC and ECC but, unfortunately, the Councils were not particularly responsive to those reports.
3. A member of staff joined Pension Scheme in July 2024, bringing the total number of employees in the scheme to 3.
4. I was recently advised by BDC that the land surrounding the Levens Way Play Area is the responsibility of the Parish Council, after I reported that the area was in need of weed spraying and cut backs to the overgrown vegetation. I had not been aware that this was PC responsibility until now but have asked our Grass contractor to tend to the area when it next cuts the grass on the Green.
5. I received an email from Saffron Building Society to advise that, in response to the Bank of England's reduction to the Base Rate, our bank account ('Sports & Social Clubs') interest rate will reduce from 2.20% to 2.00% from September 2024.

6. As you are now aware, the PC laptop stopped working and I was forced to make an emergency purchase under Delegated Authority for a new laptop. Unfortunately, the printer now needs replacing because the scanning software for it is no longer available to download onto the new laptop, rendering it unable to scan any documents (the printer model is fairly old so the software is no longer offered online). You will note a request for approval in this month's approval list.

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 advised at our April 2024 meeting that the work is scheduled for implementation this year
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 provided an update at our April 2024 meeting - ongoing
Tree Warden – voluntary position continues to be advertised	September 2022	Remains vacant
Report on electric vehicles – awaited from Braintree District Council	October 2022	

The report was **accepted**.

24/88: Financial Matters

24/88.1 Bank Reconciliations and Bank Statements

The Clerk & RFO informed the Council that due to recent technical problems with the Council's laptop and subsequent emergency purchase of a new laptop, the reporting of August bank reconciliations and statements would be deferred to October's Council meeting.

Council unanimously **accepted** the deferment of August's banking reports.

Meanwhile, the bank reconciliations calculated to 31st July 2024 and corresponding bank statements were proposed to be approved by Councillor Cogswell, seconded by Councillor Ricci and **approved** by the Council.

Action: The Clerk & RFO

24/88.2 Mid-Year Financial Reports

Similarly, the Clerk & RFO advised the Council that it had not been possible to produce any financial reports, for a mid-year comparison to budget, owing to accountancy software needing to be reinstalled on the new laptop. The mid-year reports will be provided at the next meeting.

Action: The Clerk & RFO

24/88.3 Payments & Receipts for Approval

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

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July 2024

Direct debits

15/07/24	RAC All Star (Fuel Card)		59.00
23/07/24	<u>Lloyds Card</u>		
	Viking (Stationery)	59.23	
	Argos (Printer Ink)	48.78	
	Green Flag	95.00	
	Microsoft	1.99	
	Monthly fee	<u>3.00</u>	<u>208.00</u>

Online Payments July 2024 – Current Account (Unity)

Salaries		4,481.90
Essex Pension fund	Pension Contributions	1,124.15
HMRC Cumbernauld	July Tax and NI Contributions	943.92
NGCA	June & July Hall Hire	26.00
Clerk	Expenses	13.06
NPower	Street Lighting	302.59
True Colours	Restoration Works - Village Sign	650.00
Chelmsford Safety	Litter Pickers PPE	48.60
Paul Clark Printing	Printing of GNT Magazine	1,380.00
Vision Magazine	Distribution of GNT Magazine	180.00
Perspective Landscapes	Grass Cutting – 7 th & 21 st June	144.00

Richard Edwards	External Payroll Services	174.60
Mr Peter Willett	Editorial Services - GNT	150.00

Transfer between Accounts

Unity Trust to Redwood Bank	Transfer of Funds (Earmarked Reserves)	75,000.00
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August 2024

Direct debits

14/08/24	RAC All Star (Fuel Card)	119.04
23/08/24	<u>Lloyds Card</u>	
	Tesco (Pens)	4.50
	Tesco (Milk – July Mtg)	0.90
	WH Smith (Diary)	11.99
	Quest Motors (Van Service & MOT)	461.23
	Argos (Council Mobile Phone)	69.99
	B&M Stores (Folder)	3.50
	Amazon (Phone Protector & Case)	15.98
	Microsoft	1.99
	Monthly fee	3.00
		<u>573.08</u>

Online Payments August 2024 - Current Account (Unity)

Salaries		4,680.66
Essex Pension fund	Pension Contributions	1,385.95
HMRC Cumbernauld	August Tax and NI Contributions	944.12
Clerk	Expenses	17.92
Senior Litter Picker	Expenses (Van Clean)	30.00
Perspective Landscapes	4 th & 18 th July Grass Cutting	144.00
JC Electricals	Electrical Installation Condition Report	180.00

Receipts in August - Current Account (Unity)

Braintree District Council	UKSPF Community Infrastructure Fund	4,975.20
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Online Payments made/to be made in September 2024 - Current Account (Unity)

NGCA	September Hall Hire	13.00
Community Heartbeat Trust	Annual Support Renewal (Defib)	198.00
Seagrave Inspection Services	Operational Inspection Report	156.00
I-Squad	Laptop Transfer of Data	£80*
Currys PC World	New Laptop & McAfee Protection	£478.00**
Signs 'n' Such	New Signs for Play Area & RAFT	312.00
Argos	New Printer	60.00**

*LGA 1972 – Power to spend 101

*LGA 1972 – Power to spend 111 (Emergency expenditure following laptop failure; delegated authority with consent from Chairman as per our Financial Regulations)

24/89: Substantive matters for consideration

24/89.1 Braintree District Council's Local Plan: Extension to Deadline Taken under Councillors' Reports.

24/89.2 To discuss Black Notley Parish Council's response to the proposal for Allotments land

The Council noted that BNPC confirmed that due to it being in the very early stages of the Hayeswood development, it was unable to comment on a request for the use of Allotments on the Great Notley East development site. Councillors agreed that there was sadly no change to current situation and that progress could be made after planning permission to this site is granted.

24/89.3 To discuss Black Notley Parish Council's response to a possible joint application for a signal crossing on London Road & to receive Speed Survey Data

The speed survey data was noted. Council also noted that BNPC had confirmed that it would not be willing to support a joint application to change the existing zebra crossing to a signal crossing, making that a total of 3 signal crossings along London Road. Councillors acknowledged that the original request had been made by 1 resident and that no further requests had been made. It was unanimously agreed that the Council would not pursue an application at this time.

24/89.4 To agree the approach for the purchase of an Electric Utility Vehicle to replace the Parish Council Van: follow up on matters identified at the last meeting

The Clerk had followed up on a number of issues relating to the purchase of an electric vehicle, which had been outlined at the last meeting.

The Council agreed to the cost to data-tag the vehicle and to get it sign-written, with quotes having been provided at rates of £242.50+VAT and £400+VAT respectively. Councillors asked the Clerk to obtain a quote to install a GPS tracking device on the vehicle.

The Council was reassured to learn that the storing and charging of the vehicle in the storage unit would have no impact on the current buildings insurance policy.

It was accepted that no quote could be obtained for vehicle insurance until the vehicle has been built and a number plate issued; however, Council was pleased to learn that the current motor insurer was confident that it could offer cover on such a vehicle.

Council also accepted that travel to/from the storage unit to collect the vehicle would be included within the Litter Team's contracted working hours.

An article in October's GNT informing residents of the Parish Council's approach to a greener way of working should be published.

Following the earlier discussion with NGCA representatives, it was agreed that meter with timed switch would be the best approach and the expenditure of £400 was approved. Council also agreed to the remuneration of the electricity charges to NGCA. The Clerk & RFO advised the Council that it would be unable to recover any associated VAT costs as the energy invoices would not be issued in the Parish Council's name and that NGCA would benefit from that.

Lastly, it was agreed that Council would seek to dispense of the van via We Buy Any Car, with the lowest acceptable sale price of £4,800. The Council's art work would also need to be removed prior to sale.

All motions were proposed by Councillor Cunningham, seconded by Councillor Ricci and **approved** by the Council.

Action: The Clerk & RFO

24/89.5 To agree the action plan for Remembrance Sunday 2024

The draft action plan provided by the Clerk was agreed. Councillor Cunningham agreed to re-order additional safety barriers from Essex Highways. Councillor Cogswell agreed to speak with the GN Photography Club. The Chairman confirmed that she would not be able to attend this event, owing to prior personal arrangements. Councillor Ricci agreed to stand in to provide a Chair's welcome speech. Council agreed to the suggested proposal to loan the use of the PA system from the local Scouts group, rather than rent the system privately at a significant cost, in exchange for a small donation to the group. A donation of £100 was proposed by Councillor Butland, seconded by Councillor Cunningham and this was **approved** by the Council. The Clerk said that there should be an appropriate power under the LGA 1972 Act to enable the Council to make such a donation.

The Chairman and the Council wished to formally record its appreciation to WINGs and the 1st Great Notley Scouts Group.

Action: The Clerk

24/89.6 To receive the latest Operational Report from Seagrave Inspection Services

Councillor Crawford advised the Council that the vegetation within the play area was extremely overgrown and required cutting back. The Clerk advised Council that she had instructed the Grass Contractor to make the necessary cut backs when the grass on the village green was next cut. The Clerk agreed to chase the matter. Councillor Crawford also remarked on the report’s advisory to replace the current play area gate with a self-closing gate. As the play park is not road-facing, it was agreed that this was not an urgent matter. Councillor Crawford agreed to ask about the issue at the refresher training course he is scheduled to attend in the coming months. The report was **accepted**.

24/89.7 To receive a Resident’s views regarding issues with parking & anti-social behaviour at Hidcote Way

The Council sympathises with the issues raised in the email but said that, sadly, it was a common issue in residential areas. Councillors questioned the whether the parking issues had been exacerbated by recent increased parking charges at the Great Notley Country Park. The Clerk was advised to contact the Anti-Social Behaviour department at the District Council to ask whether any formal reports had been made.

24/90: Planning applications, Tree Preservation Orders and other planning matters

24/90.1 New Applications within the Parish

Councillor Ricci left the room.

Application No.	Application	Representations
24/01649/HH	3 Sorrel Grove Great Notley Essex CM77 7ZR - Conversion of garage into habitable rooms – Deadline 2 September 2024	To convert interval garage to study and store room. No change to external look or footprint. Noted that neighbouring property sought previous permission for the same and the Planning Inspector had deemed that garage too small to qualify as a garage. No objection

24/90.2 To note results of previous planning applications

The following results were **noted** -

Application No.	Application	Result
24/01162/HH	5 Wood Way Great Notley Essex CM77 7JS – Single storey rear extension	Granted
24/01149/PLD	17 Mallard Close Great Notley Essex CM77 7YD – Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development – Single storey rear extension	Granted
24/00917/TPO	3 Thirlmere Close Great Notley Essex CM77 7UL - Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO - 10/10 G7 T1 - Lime - Crown lift and remove epicormic growth to 4m. Crown thin by volume - 30% - Deadline 31 st May 2024	Remains Pending Consideration (determination deadline 24 th June 2024)
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.	Granted
24/01295/TPO	Rear of 18 Tufted Close Great Notley CM77 7YE Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO - 38/2001 T001-1No. Oak tree located closest the rear boundary of No.18 Tufted Close - Sever ivy at the base of the tree to allow future inspection. - Prune back selected branches which	Remains Pending Decision (Determination Deadline 9 th August 2024)

	overhang the rear garden of no.18 only by up to 2m.	
24/01351/PLD	22 Timbers Close Great Notley Essex CM77 7GZ - Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development - Single storey rear extension	Granted
24/01303/HH	5 Brancaster Drive Great Notley Essex CM77 7JR - Erection of a two storey and single storey rear extension	Pending Decision – Determination Deadline 20 th August 2024

Councillor Ricci returned to the room.

24/91: Matters for next agenda

- Greensward Parking on Cuckoo Way – Councillor Cunningham (lead)

24/92: Chairman to close the meeting

The meeting was closed at 8.46pm.