

RETTENDON PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held remotely on Tuesday 24th November
2020.**

Councillors attended the meeting through digital link.

Present: Cllr Mark Fleming (Chairman)
Cllr Sandie Cottee
Cllr Hazel Dale Evans
Cllr Denise Fleming
Cllr Roy Hart
Cllr James Knight
Cllr David Phillips
Cllr Ray Ride
Cllr Barbara Wright

Chelmsford City Councillor Paul Clark also attended.

There were nine members of the public in attendance.

114-20/21 To Receive Apologies and to approve Reasons for Absence

No apologies were received.

115-20/21 Declarations of Interest on Items on the Agenda

There were no Declarations of Interest.

116-20/21 Public Forum – strictly 5 minutes only per speaker

A resident referred to the proposed solar farm at Canon Brook and said they lived adjacent to the site and would like to know the Parish Council's views.

The Chairman said Councillors had not yet seen the application for this site but that when they did, they would do their best to take into account the views of local residents. He said at this point it would be inappropriate to give the views of individual councillors but that if the application was considered at December's meeting, residents were very welcome to come and make their views known.

Cllr Knight said details of the public consultation for this proposal had been posted on the Parish Council's Facebook page.

Cllr Hart referred to the Bell Fields dispute and the court case. He said it had been a long haul and that he was still being threatened by the Parish Council's solicitors with imprisonment. He said the judge had decreed he had won the case and no costs had been awarded. He asked as the Parish Council

Signed _____
Councillor M. Fleming, Chairman

did not own the Bell Fields why had they spent £60,000 on a site they did not own. He said the site was owned by the parish and the Council managed it. He said he was considering bringing a possible charge of gross mismanagement of the public purse where twice the annual precept had been spent, and he asked how this money would be reimbursed to residents. He said the Council's legal representation should be changed from Tees to a solicitor with no ties to the Council.

117-20/21 To agree the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27th October 2020 as a true record for signature by the Chairman at a later date

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27th October 2020 were **agreed** as a true record for signature by the Chairman at a later date.

118-20/21 To receive the Essex County Councillor and Ward Councillors' reports.

The following report was received from Essex County Councillor Ian Grundy:

"Not surprisingly Covid continues to dominate our workload at ECC but at least the news on vaccines is a bit of cheer for everyone. With unemployment currently over 70k in the county this is a real concern, particularly hard hit being the hospitality industry. Considerable resource is being put into business revival with a strong emphasis on apprenticeships and training.

Our Children's Services team have been very successful with the Lap Top scheme. This involves reconditioning old unwanted lap tops and giving them to colleges/schools for the use by children who lack that facility. So far 160 have been donated with a further 200 in the pipeline. Once Covid is over it is hoped to expand this worthwhile scheme.

Chelmsford is one of six centres in Essex to be nominated to trial Electric Scooters. The trial paid for by Government will last for twelve months and will work a bit like the Boris bikes in London. Safety will be paramount and there are many strict conditions that must be adhered to and where they can go will be specified. They will not be allowed in the High Street or Bond Street! The trial is likely to start in the new year.

It certainly will be interesting, quite controversial but with the objectives of reducing traffic, air pollution and generally exploring how we will travel in and around our town and city centres in the decades to come."

CCC Councillor Paul Clark referred to the Local Government Review that had been discussed at previous meetings. He said the Review had been deferred until 2021.

He referred to the everchanging situation regarding Covid-19 and said all information was available on the City Council's website.

He said he would be contributing to the next issue of the Rettendon & Battlesbridge newsletter and further details would be included in that.

119-20/21 To receive reports from the following:

a) Village Hall Committee representative

Cllr Cottee said no meeting had been held. She said a grant of £10,000 had been received following contact from Chelmsford City Council, and that further detail would be available in the parish newsletter.

b) Parish Survey Working Group

Cllr Cottee said that a meeting had been held the previous week but that this was difficult to discuss over Zoom. She said the Group would like to hold physical consultations so it had been decided to postpone the survey until 2021, with the consultations hopefully being held in the spring.

c) Bus Shelter Working Group

Cllr Cottee said that all bus shelters had been cleaned and that the stop at the turnpike had been repaired. She said this was considered sufficient until spring, when further maintenance including repair of paintwork would be investigated.

d) S-Type Security Working Group

Cllr Phillips said a meeting had been held with S-Type Security where improvements to reporting had been discussed. He said hopefully they would soon be trialling tracking patrols on a digital map so that more meaningful reports could be given to future Council meetings.

e) Sonters Down Play Area Working Group

Cllr Phillips said there had been no meeting. He said there was very little to be done other than monitoring the Area but that he was not aware of any problems.

120-20/21 Finance

To agree to authorise invoices for payment, receive copy Bank statements and details of expenditure to date.

Invoices were **authorised** as listed below.

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|----------------------|---------------------|---------|
| K. Kane | November Salary | £730.16 |
| K. Kane | Provision of Office | £200.00 |
| K. Kane | Mileage | £63.00 |
| Royal British Legion | Wreath | £19.00 |
| S-Type Security | Security Patrol | £525.00 |
| A K Hobson | Bus shelter repair | £222.00 |

Signed _____
Councillor M. Fleming, Chairman

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|-----------------|---------------------|---------|
| Stanley Tee LLP | Legal costs | £673.59 |
| Anglian Water | Water – Bell Fields | £12.59 |

121-20/21 To agree the response to planning applications notified to the Parish Council as statutory consultee (Appendix A)

20/01760/FUL - Meadowcroft Nursery Woodham Road Battlesbridge Wickford - Enclosure of part of existing canopy.

It was **agreed** that the Council would support this application.

20/05252/TPO - Hereford House Main Road Rettendon Chelmsford - T1 - Horse Chestnut - Fell. Reasons: The tree is in a very built up area in a shared drive way less than 8ft from neighbour's fence & over hanging another neighbour's garden too. Concerns for the roots which could and will cause a problem the bigger the tree gets given the proximity to houses. Falling conkers pose a danger to people and vehicles and falling leaves are slippery and messy. If ever struck by lightening, could pose a risk to neighbouring property which is an older wooden built building. Although a beautiful tree, it is in the wrong place for the size of it and should really be in a park.

It was **agreed** that the Council would oppose this application as:

- The grounds on which felling was requested had already been addressed;
- The tree was not diseased.

122-20/21 Budget/Precept 2021/2022

a) To consider and possibly agree the Council budget for the 2021/22 municipal year

It was agreed that Community Transport at £5,000 and Grants at £2,000 would be added back into the draft budget circulated prior to the meeting, with an additional line of £1,000 for a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Clerk said she would circulate the amended budget prior to the December meeting.

b) To consider and possibly agree the Council's precept demand on Chelmsford City Council for the 2021/22 municipal year

This Item was deferred.

123-20/21 To review and possibly agree amendments to the following policies:

a) Training Policy

Signed _____
Councillor M. Fleming, Chairman

The policy was reviewed and the amendments were **agreed** as circulated prior to the meeting.

b) Financial Reserves Policy

This was deferred to the December meeting.

c) Remote Meetings Policy

This was deferred to the December meeting.

124-20/21 Bell Fields

a) To receive an update from the Chairman

The Chairman referred to the judgment handed down which gave the Parish Council sole authority to appoint trustees and named the current trustees. He said the previous day the costs hearing had taken place and he had been surprised and disappointed that no costs order had been made, so that each party had to pay their own costs.

He said the defendants had been required to deliver to Tees by Friday 27th November 2020 some 90 documents not previously handed over. He said that the trustees would then have two months to decide if they felt more documents were missing.

He said there was another window of 21 days for the Council to decide on one of the options listed below.

He said an extra ordinary meeting should be scheduled to agree explicitly a way forward.

It was **agreed** to suspend Standing Order 3(x) for the duration of this meeting.

b) To discuss the land ownership of the Bell Fields (documents circulated prior to the meeting)

This Item was deferred.

125-20/21 Training

a) To consider and possibly agree attendance at the EALC Health and Well-Being Forum by Cllrs Cottee, D Fleming, Knight and Wright

It was **agreed** that Cottee and Wright would attend the EALC Health and Well-Being Forum.

b) To consider and possibly agree attendance at EALC Allotments training by Cllrs D Fleming and Phillips.

It was **agreed** that Cllr Phillips would attend the EALC Allotments training.

The Clerk said she would add future training requests to the agenda for the appropriate meeting.

126-20/21 To consider the advisability of the formation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish

The **advisability** of the formation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish was considered.

Cllr Dale Evans said she would investigate this further and revert to the Council in due course.

127-20/21 Reports from Councillors on Council activities since the last meeting

Cllr Dale Evans left the meeting.

Cllr Phillips said one of the items from the list of Highways issues reported to Essex Highways had been scheduled for repair.

128-20/21 Date of the next Parish Council Meeting: To be confirmed.