

## **RETTENDON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held remotely on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

**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

**There were eleven members of the public in attendance.**

**190-20/21 To Receive Apologies and to approve Reasons for Absence**

There were no apologies to receive.

**191-20/21 Declarations of Interest on Items on the Agenda**

Cllr Ride declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 202-20/21.

Cllr Denise Fleming declared a non-pecuniary interest in Items 200-20/21 and 202-20/21.

Cllr Wright declared an interest in anything to do with the Rettendon & Battlesbridge Newsletter.

**192-20/21 Public Forum – strictly 5 minutes only per speaker**

Mr Wilson referred to Item 202-20/21. He said the pitch was a good facility for the village and was just about playable but towards the lower side. He said the referees had reported problems with rutting and striations running across the pitch which could be dangerous. He said the grant would be welcome to make the pitch playable.

Mr Darren Thompson of South Woodham Football Club said he would support the application for a grant for remedial work. He said Chelmsford City Council carried out remedial work annually on pitches for which they were responsible, but no remedial work had been carried out on the Bell Fields since SWFC had been playing there. He said at least two games had been called off by referees because of safety concerns and the pitch had not been used competitively since September 2020. He said these works were

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor M. Fleming, Chairman

more than ongoing maintenance and would give the pitch the surface it needed long-term. He said he would like to support the application.

Mrs Jones said she was speaking as a trustee of the Bell Fields. She said the trustees had met regularly with Mr Thompson. She said the pitch was worn out in the goal mouth and the water supply needed to be reconnected. She said she believed the pitch was last inspected five years previously with no maintenance of the drainage since and both contractors approached had identified the same problem. She said the charity funds were low and urged the Council to support the application.

Mr Wright said he spoke as Acting Political Editor of the Rettendon & Battlesbridge Newsletter. He referred to a statement received from the defendants on the High Court case regarding the Bell Fields and said it had been decided not to include this in the newsletter. He referred to examples of advice given to the defendants by Birkett Long which had proved to be wrong, regarding changing the charities to CIOs. He said he believed that the Council discussing this issue at a previous meeting was more to do with blackening the name of the defendants especially Roy Hart.

He referred to a submission from Cllr Knight regarding the football pitch.

The Chairman said this had been sent by Cllr Knight in a private capacity.

The Chairman read an email from Mrs Judd as follows:

*A question for Councillor Dale-Evans:*

*Regarding your article in the March newsletter about the election of the Bell Field Trustees.*

*I think that given the fact that thousands of pounds of this community's money has been spent establishing ownership of the Bell Fields the trustees should be Parish Councillors.*

*As the Parish Council own the Bell Fields, they are best placed to manage the charities and not have to concern themselves that any residents that are made trustees will lose sight of who owns the Bell Fields and not make random changes.*

*I feel that it is time to put aside the divide in the Parish Council, and that you represent the whole community that voted you in as councillor and not the few whose interests you put above the community as a whole.*

**193-20/21 Minutes**

- i) **To agree the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 as a true record for signature by the Chairman at a later date**

With the addition of the noting of Cllr Wright's abstention from voting under Item 181-20/21 ii) the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 were agreed as a true record for signature by the Chairman at a later date.

- ii) **To agree the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 as a true record for signature by the Chairman at a later date**

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were agreed as a true record for signature by the Chairman at a later date.

**194-20/21 To receive the Essex County Councillor and Ward Councillors' reports.**

No report had been received from the Essex County Councillor.

Chelmsford City Councillor Paul Clark had sent his apologies and due to the upcoming elections sent no report but referred residents to the City Council website for all relevant information.

**195-20/21 To receive reports from the following:****a) Village Hall Committee representative**

Cllr Cottee said the hall remained closed except for the pre-school. She said there would possibly be a Plant Sale in the car park with pre-orders and booked times for collection. She said the Rettendon Oak was due to be inspected.

**b) Parish Survey Working Group**

Cllr Cottee said the survey had gone smoothly and to plan. She said all had been collected and Cllr Phillips was entering the information on to a spreadsheet. She said another meeting was due to discuss how to share the information.

Cllr Phillips said he had a few survey forms still to input and that the total returned was in the high 180s. He said once all the information was collated it would be put before the Council.

Cllr Cottee said the collection boxes had worked very well and could be re-used.

**c) Bus Shelter Working Group**

Cllr Cottee said the village shelters were due to be cleaned the following week.

**d) S-Type Security Working Group**

Cllr Phillips said reports were still being received from S-Type. He said survey comments seemed to be supportive.

**e) Sonters Down Play Area Working Group**

Cllr Phillips said it seemed residents were looking for additional facilities and this was something that could be discussed with Chelmsford City Council in the future. He said there was graffiti on the Teen Shelter which he would investigate.

**196-20/21 Finance**

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

Invoices were authorised for payment as follows:

Came & Co. Ltd	Insurance renewal	£1292.10
RetBatNews	Newsletter/survey	£314.75
S-Type Security & Solutions	Security patrol	£420.00
Sue Lees Consultancy	Website	£475.20
Mrs K Kane	March salary	£761.66

Cllr Wright abstained from voting on the payment to RetBatNews.

It was noted that Tees Credit Control would be informed of the query regarding Counsel's fees on which the Council were waiting for a response from David Perry.

**197-20/21 To agree the response to planning applications notified to the Parish Council as statutory consultee.**

21/00261/OUT - Land At Whitegates Woodham Road Rettendon Wickford - Outline application for the demolition of existing outbuildings and the construction of four detached dwellings with associated access and amenity space. (Access, Layout and Scale being sought, all other matters reserved).

It was agreed that the Council would comment as follows:

The Council would always prefer to preserve Green Belt land. In this instance, the Council would not object to this application providing the brownfield footprint matches the footprint of the proposed buildings.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor M. Fleming, Chairman

21/00394/FUL - Land East And West Of A130, North And South Of Canon Barns Road East Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex - Installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) park generating up to 49.9 MW of electricity spread over three sites (sited either side of the A130/Canons Barn Road), comprising of ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, battery-based electricity storage containers, and One Point of Connection (POC) mast of up to 35m in height on Church Road (junction with Link House Farm), together with inverters/transformer stations, Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Substation, access and cable connection to POC mast to connect to 132 kV power line, customer substation/switchgear and meter kiosk, batteries, internal buried cabling and grid connection cables, internal access tracks, security fencing and gates and CCTV cameras, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

It was **agreed** that the Council would object to this application and ask that an alternative location be sought.

**21/00532/FUL - Silverwood South Hanningfield Road Rettendon Common Chelmsford - Retrospective application for the construction of an outbuilding for the housing of plant and machinery for the equestrian facility.**

Cllr Wright declared a pecuniary interest in this application and took no part in the discussion or the vote.

It was **agreed** that the Council had no objection to this application.

**198-20/21 To consider and possibly agree a response to the Essex County Council Minerals Local Plan 2014 (Draft Proposed Amendments)**

This Item was **deferred**.

**199-20/21 To consider and possibly agree to the purchase of asset tags for the Council's current assets (details circulated prior to the meeting)**

This item was **deferred**.

**200-20/21 To consider and possibly agree to follow the same procedure to appoint the Bell Fields trustees as was agreed by the Council in 2020 to appoint the Richard Cannon Charity trustees.**

The motion was **defeated** (3 For; 5 Against; 1 Abstention)

**201-20/21 To receive a statement from Cllr Hart about matters raised at a previous meeting regarding the Bell Fields.**

A statement from Cllr Hart about matters raised at a previous meeting regarding the Bell Fields was received and is attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

**202-20/21 To consider and possibly agree a grant application from the Trustees of the Upper Bell Field charity.**

Cllr Ride and Cllr Denise Fleming had declared an interest in this Item and took no part in the discussion or the vote.

The Clerk asked all Councillors to be mindful of the advice from the Monitoring Officer regarding declaration of interests.

Cllr Hart said he would ignore this advice. He said it was important to get an independent report prior to giving the grant, He said the pitch did not need finance and he said he would come back with 100% proof by the next meeting that it was not needed.

It was **agreed** to award the amount for which the Trustees of the Upper Bell Field charity had applied.

Cllr Dale Evans referred to Cllr Phillips as a “silly boy”.

Cllr Hart said he agreed.

The Chairman asked Cllr Dale Evans to apologise to Cllr Phillips.

Cllr Phillips said he would like an apology from Cllr Dale Evans and Cllr Hart.

Cllr Hart said he would not apologise.

Cllr Dale Evans referred to the comment made about her under Item 192-20/21.

Cllr Dale Evans apologised to Cllr Phillips.

Cllr Phillips said he accepted Cllr Dale Evans’ apology and would take appropriate action regarding Cllr Hart.

Cllr Cottee said she had been disappointed not to receive an answer to the question she had asked about the drainage.

**203-20/21 “Mid-Term” Report**

**a) To discuss publishing a “mid-term” report from the PC**

Publishing a “mid-term” report was discussed.

**b) To consider and possibly agree a budget of up to £150 for printing costs. (Content to be approved subsequently.)**

A budget of up to £150 for printing costs was **agreed**.

**204-20/21 Reports from Councillors on Council activities since the last meeting**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor M. Fleming, Chairman

Cllr Cottee referred to the Chelmsford City Council Love Your Parish initiative. She said a team would visit the parish on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021 to clean the area from the Rettendon Turnpike to the Wheatsheaf.

Cllr Knight said he had attended a meeting with representatives regarding the Bradwell B proposals. He said he had circulated a report on the meeting to councillors.

He said Chelmsford City Council had succeeded in gaining two injunctions against the owners of Hayes Country Park, details of which he had circulated.

He said he would circulate details of training sessions he had attended.

Cllr D Fleming referred to planting along highways and said she would bring further information to a future meeting.

Cllr Phillips referred to the Village Survey results and said there were several respondents who had expressed an interest in the provision of allotments.

Cllr Dale Evans said she had been out picking up litter and keeping an eye on maintenance of the Village Hall.

Cllr Hart said he was looking at entering Battlesbridge into the Best Kept Village competition.

**205-20/21 Date of the next Parish Council Meeting**

It was agreed that the next full Council Meeting would take place online on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7.30pm.

It was agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Council would take place online on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.30pm.

## Appendix 1 – Statement of Cllr Hart

To RUTLAND CHARITY COUNCIL

I Councillor Roy Hart of Toad Hall, Battlesbridge, Essex. SS11 8TS will say as follows:

1. It has been suggested that I had an intention to build houses on the Bell Fields. That is not the case.
2. Birkett Long introduced us to the possibility of running the Bell Fields through a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). I now understand that there may have been a reference to the raising of funds against a charity asset within that document, however, I never had an intention to build houses on the land. In actual fact our main aim was totally contrary to this. All we were trying to do was to appoint four residents as trustees which we thought was an excellent idea. The Charity Commission in the end advised us that all we needed to do was to put in a resolution for this which we did and it was accepted. We were never ever a (CIO)
3. I believe that the Court case with the Council that I defended at my own expense and the fact that I orchestrated the transfer of the Bell Fields to the Charity Commission, evidences that I have no intention of building anything on the land other than a Pavilion for the enjoyment and use of local residents.
4. I am not entirely sure why I have been asked to produce this statement with 'statement of truth', I would be grateful if someone could confirm.

### STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Signed .....

Roy Hart

Dated .....

28th MARCH 2021

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor M. Fleming, Chairman