

RETTENDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held remotely on Tuesday 4th May 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 seven members of the public in attendance.

1-21/22 To elect the Chairman of the Council and to receive declaration of acceptance of office.

Cllr M. Fleming said he would be standing down as Chairman and not seeking re-election. He thanked the Clerk for her help over the past four years.

Cllr Phillips was elected unanimously as Chairman.

The Council noted that he would sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at a later date as this was a remote meeting.

Cllr Phillips thanked Cllr Fleming for all his hard work as Chairman and said he hoped Cllr Fleming would continue as a valued member of the Council.

2-21/22 To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Council and to receive declaration of acceptance of office

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|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Cllr M Fleming | Proposed: Cllr Phillips | Seconded: Cllr Ride |
| Cllr Cottee | Proposed: Cllr Dale Evans | Seconded: Cllr Hart |

Cllr M Fleming received five votes.

Cllr Cottee received four votes.

Cllr M Fleming was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council.

Signed _____
Councillor D. Phillips, Chairman

Cllr Fleming thanked Cllr Knight for his service as Vice-Chair for the past two years and said he hoped Cllr Knight would continue to be an active member of the Council.

3-21/22 Apologies and Reasons for Absence

There were no apologies to receive.

4-21/22 Declarations of Interest on Items on the Agenda

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5-21/22 Public Forum – strictly 5 minutes only per speaker

There were no comments.

6-21/22 To agree the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22 April 2021.

Cllr Dale Evans said she would like it recorded that Cllr M Fleming had resigned as a trustee of the Bell Fields charities. She said Cllr D Fleming had not declared an interest in Item 215-20/21.

Cllr Cottee read the following:

“I would like it on record that 2 pertinent questions were left unanswered by Cllr Ride and Trustees of Bell Field, in relation to the grant for remedial work to the football pitch. One question regarding a report from the Essex Football Association was answered at the Parish Council Meeting on 30th March by Glenys Jones. Since I had been required to vote on approving this grant at the meeting, I had made it clear in several emails that this information was important to me and the reasons why. Not having this information at a time that was relevant meant I was unable to make a properly informed decision; and since this information had been available, I did not find it helpful, nor understand, why this information was not provided before the meeting in a timely and appropriate manner when I requested it.”

Cllr M Fleming said he had already addressed the issues raised by Cllr Cottee in an email sent to her prior to the meeting.

Cllr Knight said that it was up to individual councillors whether or not to declare interests and proper procedures were in place.

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22nd April 2021 were agreed as a true record for signature by the Chairman at a later date.

7-21/22 To receive the Essex County Councillor and Ward Councillors' reports.

No reports had been received.

8-21/22 To confirm the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer for the Parish Council

The Clerk was **confirmed** as Responsible Financial Officer for the Parish Council.

9-21/22 Finance

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

There were no invoices to authorise.

b) To agree to appoint three Councillors to check finances and sign cheques

It was **agreed** that Cllrs M Fleming, Knight and Wright would continue to check finances and sign cheques.

It was **agreed** that Cllr Phillips would be added to the bank mandate as the new Chairman.

c) To agree to approve the use of variable Direct Debit payments for utility bills

It was **agreed unanimously** to approve the use of variable direct debit payments for utility bills.

10-21/22 To review the Terms of Reference for existing committees

a) Human Resources Committee

The Terms of Reference for the Human Resources Committee were reviewed and no alterations were proposed.

11-21/22 To appoint members to existing committees and Working Parties

Signed _____
Councillor D. Phillips, Chairman

The following members were appointed to existing committees and working parties:

a) Human Resources Committee

Cllrs Dale Evans, D Fleming, M Fleming and Phillips.

b) Village Hall Committee representative

Cllr Cottee

c) Parish Survey Working Group

Cllrs Cottee, Dale Evans, Knight, Phillips and Wright.

d) Bus Shelter Working Group

Cllrs Cottee, Dale Evans, Hart and Knight.

e) S-Type Security Working Group

Cllrs Dale Evans, D Fleming and Knight.

f) Sonters Down Play Area Working Group

The Council noted the Sonters Down Working Group had now disbanded. The contribution of Mr Dave Upton to the Group was noted and the Clerk said she would write to Mr Upton to express the Council's thanks.

12-21/22

To review and adopt:

a) Standing Orders

b) Financial Regulations

c) Code of Conduct

d) Procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and data protection legislation

e) Complaints Procedure

With a typographical error under S14 of the Financial Regulations corrected, it was **agreed** to adopt the above policies en bloc.

It was noted a revised Code of Conduct would be brought to the Council's June meeting.

13-21/22

To review the Parish Council's inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment

The inventory of the Council's land and assets was reviewed.

Signed _____
Councillor D. Phillips, Chairman

Cllr Wright said she would provide further information on the defibrillators.

Cllr Dale Evans made the following statement:

“There is a move to annex the Bell Fields on to the RPC Asset Register. These have never appeared on the Register before – but always treated as a parish asset under the care of RPC. It was concerning that at the last meeting on 22nd April a motion was considered about the Bell Fields where the description of charities was rejected during the preamble. Item 215-20/21. We need to be able to explain to the parish why the recreation ground and the neighbouring allotment area might be better in the ownership of the Parish Council rather than in the jurisdiction of the Official Custodian of Charities. The pavilion, however, has always been treated as a parish asset, has been consequently under their care, was paid for by them and is included on the Asset Register.”

It was noted that the laptop and projector were no longer held in the Village Hall and further investigation into their location would take place.

The damaged streetlight in Rettendon was noted for future action.

Cllrs Dale Evans and Wright said they would investigate the location of the Council’s salt bins within the parish.

Thanks were expressed to Cllr Phillips for his work on the Asset Register. Cllr Phillips said work would continue.

14-21/22 To confirm the following annual subscriptions:

- i) EALC/NALC
- ii) RCCE

The subscriptions above were **confirmed**.

15-21/22 To review the Council’s employment policies and procedures.

The Council’s employment policies and procedures were reviewed.

The Chairman said the Council would continue to review policies to ensure the Council remained compliant with all legal requirements.

16-21/22 To review and agree the Council’s representation on outside bodies:

- i) The Village Hall Management Committee

Signed _____
Councillor D. Phillips, Chairman

Cllr Cottee had already been confirmed as the representative on the Village Hall Management Committee.

ii) The Rettendon Almshouse Charity

Cllr M Fleming said that the Governing Document of the charity had been altered and he would revert to Council about appointment of new trustees.

iii) The Richard Cannon Charity

Trustees had been appointed by the Council in June 2020 for a period of four years.

17-21/22 To agree the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council up to and including the next Annual Meeting of the full Council.

The dates of the meetings of the Council were agreed as follows:

June 29 2021, July 27 2021, September 28 2021, October 26 2021, November 30 2021, December 21 2021, January 25 2022, February 22 2021, March 29 2022, April 26 2022, May 24 2022 (Annual Meeting of the Council).

It was noted that the venue would be confirmed once the position regarding re-opening of the Rettendon Memorial Hall was known.

18-21/22 To agree the response to the following planning applications (all applications are available to view at www.chelmsford.gov.uk)

There were no planning applications to consider.

19-21/22 Reports from Councillors on Council activities since the last meeting

Cllr Cottee said the Love Your Parish team from Chelmsford City Council had visited and cleaned a section of the parish from the turnpike along Main Road. She said not all the areas requested had been completed and she said she would investigate this further.

Cllr Cottee said she had a possible contact for the Community Special Constable scheme.

She referred to the Parish Survey and said a resident was providing support with the presentation of the results.

She referred to problems with parking near the primary school where a number of cars had been hit. She said ownership of a particular piece of land was being clarified.

Cllr Hart said he had been involved in two litter-picks and had cleared rubbish along the river.

Cllr Dale Evans said she had had problems joining the meeting following purchase of a new phone.

Cllr D Fleming said she had had complaints from residents about lorries on Hawk Hill. She said she was collecting evidence from residents which she could take back to the Local Highways Panel to request extra signage.

She said she had received queries about trade cars moving on to a field on Woodham Road. She said she had made enquiries and a full planning application was being submitted. She said she had reverted to the residents concerned.

She said the LHP would look at a reduction in the speed limit along Chalk Street which now had enough residences along it for Essex Highways to consider the reduction from the national speed limit.

She said the Council could apply for a licence for tree planting and could then look at planting along the verges in the parish.

She referred to problems with cars parking on the clearway. She said she had spoken to the South Essex Parking Partnership who would do more random checks.

She referred to Cllr Cottee's comments on Love Your Parish and said she had been contacted by residents who had volunteered to be part of a working party to clear the proposed area if Chelmsford's team could not return. She said she had written to Chelmsford City Council about a second visit from the team but had not yet heard back.

She said work on the new website was ongoing.

She referred to the LHP and three projects:

- The bridge at Battlesbridge which had been an ongoing proposed project since 2015. She said hopefully a new feasibility study would be undertaken this year.
- Cycle warning signs near the turning into Burnham Road. She said hopefully these would be installed in the fourth quarter of the current financial year.
- She said VE celebrations had been re-scheduled for 7th August 2021 having been abandoned during lockdown last year.

Cllr Wright said she would contact the Friends of Rettendon School to see if they could help with the parking problems near the school.

Cllr D Fleming referred to the issue of traffic during the Sunday Boot Fairs and said this was something for the Council to consider.

20-21/22 Date of the next Parish Council Meeting – 29 June 2021, venue to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed _____
Councillor D. Phillips, Chairman