

Minutes of the  
**RETTENDON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**  
**HELD AT THE RETTENDON MEMORIAL HALL**  
Main Road, Rettendon, Essex. CM3 8DP.  
**TUESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> MAY 2018, commencing at 7.30pm.**

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Tom Chapman and Lance Millane, and from Essex County Councillor Ian Grundy.

**2. To agree the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 2nd May 2017.**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by Cllr Mark Fleming.

**3. To Receive the Chairman's Annual Report**

The Chairman's Annual Report was received (attached as Appendix 1).

**4. To note the Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.**

**Community Account: £63,486.40 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

**Business Account: £61,585.70 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

**HSBC Account: £30,250-00 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

The Statement of Accounts was noted.

**4. Visiting County/Ward Councillors**

Essex County Councillor Ian Grundy sent the following report:

"I am pleased to report Essex County Council has a secure budget with strong financial controls, unlike the tragic situation that has occurred in Northamptonshire and is giving worries to a few other authorities as well. As many residents will be aware, well over half of the County budget is spent on Adult and Children Social Care needs and this continues to be a great concern to us. We continue lobby Government for reform to support an ever increasing elderly population, this is of course a national problem.

We have had the coldest winter for 10 years and I am well aware of the damage to our roads, including of course potholes. Thanks to extra funding we have increased the number of crews doing repairs from 20 to 30 per day. I am pleased to report good progress is being made but realistically it will be a few months into the summer to bring under control.

Speeding I appreciate is a continuing problem and we do rely on our police to enforce. Over the last year the number of vehicles stopped for offences has gone up by some 14% and the number of arrests by 39%. The Community Speed Watch scheme has been given greater recognition and support by the police and if this something you currently don't deploy, it might well be worth considering - there has been a considerable number of new groups formed across the county over the past few months. Another interesting development is the acceptance by the police of video clips from drivers and horse riders on driver behaviour issues, some of which have led to prosecution.

Finally there is an ongoing debate at County to encourage the devolution of issues that can be better dealt with locally. I hope when this is formally presented you will see this an opportunity to take on as a Parish Council.

Thank you again and my apologies for not being able to join you."

Cllr Ride said he also spoke for Cllr Millane, who was at a Planning meeting.

He said Chelmsford City Council was covering an area growing in size and significance. The Council looked after 180,000 people and 75,000 houses across all wards. The business parks and employment were growing. The Council has had a strong year, providing quality services to residents. There is a strong housing programme with a 5 year plan, and a further plan on stocks for approval. For 2018/19 the Council is in an excellent financial position with a balanced budget and resources in hand. In less than 2 years the Council will be self-sufficient as it has pursued strong lines to provide commercial income. One director was lost over the year, and the Leader of Cabinet and the Chief Executive Officer decided to run with existing portfolio holders rather than replace the director, saving £125,000.

With regard to the ward, in recent weeks both Cllr Ride and Cllr Millane have pursued enforcement issues including Moorlands. Cllr Ride was horrified to see the scale of unlawful activities here, and plans are in hand to find a resolution.

The ward councillors have supported issues at Hayes and assisted other residents with planning issues. They have listened to concerns about Runwell Hall Farm. One planning application has already been refused. He has asked Highways for a meeting regarding that site as movement of vehicles is destroying the area, and he hopes for a successful outcome.

Affordable/shared equity housing is available on St Lukes for the benefit of Rettendon and Runwell residents.

The next surgery will be on 16th June 2018.

## 6. Reports from local organisations

**Knit and Natter Group** – this is held every first and third Wednesday of the month in the committee room in the village hall. It is an informal meeting of like-minded people and is quite willing to welcome anyone with hobbies they cannot do at home. It is an informal place to do what you want to do on a regular basis, and support will be given to anyone who comes along.

**Bowls** – Monday and Thursday, all abilities welcome.

There are plans for the hall to have keep-fit classes from September. Everything will be reported in the newsletter. This is your hall for you to use so please come along.

**All Saints Church** – The church dates from the eleventh century and is a Grade One listed building; it is said to be the finest church in the country by English Heritage. There is no financial support from external bodies, it is all down to the efforts of the parishioners with money in the plate, standing orders and Gift Aid. There is also fundraising activity. The church has to raise £41,000 each year and from this they have to pay insurance, running repairs, maintenance, and look after the organ and the bells.

The church has received grants from the Parish Council for maintenance of the churchyard, and is very grateful. There is a legal right to be interred there if you are a resident. There are five or six mowers which are locked away to prevent theft, and the overheads for these have to be met. The operation of the mowers is undertaken by volunteers, some of whom are now elderly. One of these comes all the way from Colchester. Money from the Parish Council is ringfenced for maintenance of the churchyard. The church has various ways to fundraise and collects stamps, coins and mobile phones. Information is in the newsletter.

**Cricket Club** – the club has had break-ins over the past couple of years. The clubhouse has now been sorted out and is back to how it was. The club is looking at security and is in discussion with the Parish Council. There will be a fundraising match on 27<sup>th</sup> May, playing Rayleigh, with a band playing afterwards.

**River Crouch Conservation Trust** – the river acts as a boundary for Rettendon. Up to 60 volunteers have been cleaning it and now there are brown trout, carp and roach on the river.

**Sailability** – this is held at Hanningfield Reservoir for those suffering from disabilities or depression. We are always looking for both volunteers and those who would benefit. There are trained helpers available.

**Rettendon Horticultural Society** – “Our constitution states that we should promote horticultural activity to all age ranges and all residents, from window boxes to big beds.

We have an ongoing programme incorporating two talks, two trips out, a big plant sale and three shows (spring, summer and autumn). Our summer show flagship event has classes for all home and garden activities, cookery, sewing skills, art and handicrafts, in addition to the core classes of flowers, fruit, vegetables and floral art. These are all open classes (no closed or restrictive sections) although the children can enter some age-related classes where they can perhaps feel more comfortable.

Our trips are proving popular and this year we are visiting Bressingham Steam Railway and Gardens for the wider interest in June; and the RHS Gardens at Wisley in September as we have to keep up with the experts.

It is the aim of this society to work closely with other Rettendon groups for mutual benefit and generally this has worked well. We have all gained by understanding each other's needs and being in touch has brought some enrichment. We are also in a cooperation group of other Horticultural Societies in order to exchange views and share facilities and have benefited from the mutual support this brings – a quiz, speaker, and other shows keep us pretty busy.”

**Rettendon Primary School** – The headteacher of the school brought log books and the punishment book, extracts of social history which the children find fascinating. She said if anyone had a connection with the school they could make an appointment to come and have a look at them.

In 1912, records show children were absent due to pea-picking, when pea-picking ceased for a few days the children returned. A few days later, pea-picking returned so the Head closed the school!

During the First World War the girls were knitting socks and bedjackets for the soldiers in hospital. During the Second World War, records show the children being taken down into the shelter.

The punishment book showed punishments of two strokes for playing truant, trespassing in the cornfield. Apples were also thrown at the vicar.

The Head said she had been at the school for 22 years, which had been both an amazing and turbulent time. At the start the roll was just under 70, now it is 140. A lot of children left due to the scaling back of Runwell Hospital. As houses became privately owned, fluidity was lost and families grew up without being replaced by younger people. To remain viable, the school built a nursery to bring in children from beyond the village. 75% of the children are now from outside Rettendon, but with all day care provided it keeps the school in the village.

There are five classes, from reception to secondary transition, with excellent secondary schools in the area. Moving forward, there are budget issues so the school has to be strategic and inventive – it is still a Local Authority school but academisation is always in the wings.

## **7. Discussion and Questions from the Public on matters affecting the Parish**

A resident mentioned the chicanes which always have queues and asked about removing them, as this would take away the need for maintenance. She asked if Cllr Ride's appointment to the Highways Panel was permanent. She also asked if Cllr Ride had offered funding to Rettendon Parish Council for Highways issues.

Cllr Ride said ward councillors were frustrated by LHP procedures. He said there was no sensible process for dealing with issues, and they were looking at rethinking this. Many colleagues offered match funding for starting schemes. With regard to work on the bridge at Battlesbridge, a lot of time had elapsed and the feasibility study was not yet done. He said the Parish Council might be offered match funding for this – if this was the issue to which the resident referred.

The same resident referred to the flood report given by Cllr Ride at the previous Parish Council meeting. She said consultants for unblocking the drains had been mentioned but there was no mention of Battlesbridge. She said South Hanningfield Road suffered and there was no mention of problems for Hoe Lane. She said the procedure for investigating was a bit overwhelming.

She referred to two articles in the Chronicle which had been published following the end of consultation periods.

She referred to Moorlands, which was not within the parish.

A resident said if contributions were to be made to Chelmsford City Council and Essex County Council, the consequences should be explained to residents.

A resident clarified the difference between the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the Council.

A resident referred to the gateways and said they were unsafe and he would like to pick up on them being removed. He asked if the Parish Council could look at other ways of traffic calming.

He asked if the Council could consider ways to improve the situation at weekends, when due to traffic problems it was impossible to get out of the village.

**8. Date, Time and Place of the next Annual Parish Meeting.**

The next Annual Parish Meeting will take place in May 2019, date and time to be confirmed.