

***Minutes of The Great Bentley Annual Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 4th May in Great Bentley Village Hall at 7.30pm***

Present

Cllr Robert Taylor (Chairman) Cllr Lynda McWilliams (Vice-Chairman), Cllr George Flint, Cllr Peter De-Vaux Balbirnie, Cllr William Herbert, Cllr Edward Fox, Cllr Jonathan Hills, Cllr David Gibbon, Cllr George Wright,

In Attendance

Miss Janet D Bloomfield (Clerk to the Council), Mr Geoffrey Catchpole (Retired Clerk to the Council), Cllr Derek Robinson (ECC), Ten members of the public and James Dwan (The press)

1. Chairman's Report

Cllr R Taylor read out his report.

The Parish Council has had a very busy year serving and responding to the needs of the village.

Thank you to you the parishioners for keeping us informed with the problems that you have experienced throughout the year.

Farewells

During the year we have said goodbye to three long serving Councillors, Christine Black, Hilary Burdett and David Hinds. We thank them for their service over the years. At the end of March this year Geoff Catchpole retired as our clerk. This is after 30 years service and a special thank you party was held for him to bid him a happy retirement. Geoff is going to help us in an advisory capacity until the new clerk has settled in.

Welcomes

New councillors have been elected and appointed during the year and we welcome them onto the council. They are George Wright, David Gibbon, Jonathon Hills, Peter Balbirnie and Ted Fox. In December Janet Bloomfield joined us as an assistant clerk and has now become our clerk. We wish her all the best working with us for the good of Great Bentley. We are pleased to have with us at our monthly Parish Council meetings Derek Robinson our new County Councillor.

Footways and Street lighting

During the year two new street lights have been installed at dark spots in the village. One is opposite the Village Hall and the other along the new and welcome pathway installed by the County Council in Thorrington Road.

Affordable Housing

You will all have seen the exhibition by the Rural Housing Trust on affordable housing in St Mary's Road Aingers Green. Well the government has not yet come up

with the finance for this project even though there are 48 local families registered for the proposed 12 houses. The Trust is confident that the money will come and therefore is to apply for planning permission fairly soon.

Parish Community Resource Centre

You will all be aware that the Centre is now open twice a week for you to call in. Tuesdays from 9.30 to 12.30 and Thursdays 2 to 7pm. Resources are there to help you contact outside authorities as well as consult about Village and Planning information.

Young People and youth activities

During the year a basketball net and Cone Climber were installed in the play area. This was part funded by a BIFFA award. A junior size Goal post has been erected on the Green for young people to use. During the year we had a petition by young people in the village asking for Skateboard or Mountain Bike facilities. The issue here is land where the noise from this would not cause a nuisance to residents. We are still searching and the issue has not been forgotten. We are very pleased with the formation of Youth Football training in the village and have been able to support them with the space for a pitch and set aside money in the budget should it be needed.

Planning

The big issue has been the presence in the Tendring District Local Plan of Industrial development at the Oasis site at Frating. This is yet to be contested in front of a planning inspector. Developers have suggested several other housing development sites around the village and over near the Oasis site none of which have been supported by us or Tendring District Council.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

Following a public meeting and vote to seek your views over this the Council placed an order with the Police Authority. Mrs Filer has been appointed as our PCSO and is now being given local experience with one of our Police Constables. Later this month she should be seen on foot in the village.

Orange Mast

During the year with the support of the Parish Council the Planning permission for the Orange mast was agreed to be transferred further East from the original site in the woods surrounding the pumping station to a hedge line between fields.

The Pond

A great deal of effort has gone into clearing the pond of weed growth. There had been fears that the removal of these plants together with their roots would disturb the clay liner in the pond. However the roots had not penetrated the clay and the subsequent pond levels compared with the ground water level have proved that the pond still holds water. We have a promise of providing a water supply to the pond to keep the water level up and have been disappointed that this has not yet occurred.

Parking near the Surgery

As we all know parking on the Green is illegal and the Parish Council has to take steps to uphold the law and so protect our Green. This year the worst area has been near the surgery with the pressures of many people coming into the village and trying to park. We want to encourage people to use our surgery and so we have this dilemma of what best to do. By law we cannot give up Green without replacing it elsewhere. This is what happened when the road was closed across the Green. The land given back to the Green was used to widen the other roads so that they could take the traffic. None was left over and Trevor Aplin who watched these things at the time carefully made sure that there was an exact balance. We do encourage users of the surgery to use the lane behind the surgery (Forge lane) to park in and use the little cut through by Bentley House specially provided by the Doctors. Meanwhile in a similar manner as we did near the post office we are to raise the height of the kerbs to deter vehicles mounting the Green.

Fly Tipping

This past year has seen a further increase in the amount of fly tipping. However because our Caretaker has been very prompt in getting anything reported and Onyx the Tendring contractor has removed things very quickly the nuisance has been alleviated.

Mineral extraction

We all got excited over Christmas over the unexpected consultation on Mineral extraction. Unfortunately we now have to wait until August before we hear anything further.

Wayleaves across the Green

During the year we had approaches from BT over the installation of Optic Fibre cables to the Surgery. Eventually they got their act together and we agreed to a new wayleave with a suitable payment for the privilege. However their approach did enable us to rectify the situation of two poles which had been erected on the Green without permission. They are to be removed and cables placed underground.

Highway Verges

The Parish Council still successfully cuts the highway verges and other areas of land for the County Council. This operation means that the verges are cut more often and at appropriate times to suit the village.

Christmas Tree and Lights

After pressure from members of the community we tried again this year with the Christmas tree and Young People and youth activities

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Retired Councillors

During the year three retired Councillors died. They were Gordon Lord, Des Poole and Melle Jansma. We give thanks for the service they gave to the village over the years.

Luncheon Clubs

Your Parish Council supports with Grants the two luncheon clubs for the elderly serving the people of Great Bentley.

License for use of Green for Entertainment

Due to the change of law in November 2005 even an open space like the Green has to be licensed if entertainment such as Public performance of Music. Playing of amplified music and Performance of Dancing takes place. Thus the Green is now licensed from 9am to 10.30 pm. Anyone using the Green for organised events must first have written permission and sign up to the conditions the Council has to apply. This does not include alcohol licensing and these have to be applied for separately. Extension to the License can also be applied for if the Parish Council agrees. Under this same change in law The Plough received permission to extend its hours of operation despite opposition from the village. If the operation does cause nuisance to neighbours and this can be proved and recorded then the law is stronger now to have the permission rescinded.

Parking on Double Yellow lines

Even though we only have a small stretch these lines are badly abused, including by local people who should be aware of the hazard to other drivers and pedestrians they are causing. In fact the parking on pavements and across driveways all around this area of the village is appalling and the people who live there are fed up with it. We are hoping that once our PCSO is in place she will be able to move people on and the message will get through that it is not acceptable. For most of us walking a few yards is not a problem so please do not be tempted. 28 penalty fines have been imposed for people parking on these lines over the year by the parking attendants from Tendring DC.

2. Coments and discussion by Parishioners and if necessary resolution.

Cllr R Taylor ask the public if they had anything they wasnted to discuss. The public asked several questions and were answered by the Council.

Chairman.....

Date