

Minutes of The Great Bentley Parish Council Meeting Thursday 6th April 2006 in Great Bentley Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present

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

In Attendance

Miss Janet D Bloomfield (Clerk to the Council), Mr Geoffrey Catchpole (Retired Clerk to the Council), Seven members of the public and James Dwan (The press)

1. Apologies for absence Cllr Jonathan Hills. Cllr Robert Taylor

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th April 2006 were approved and signed as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Edward Fox and seconded by William Herbert.

3. Declaration of Interest

Cllr L McWilliams asked if Cllrs would now declare if they have an interest.

Cllr Edward Fox declared an interest in the Affordable Housing.

Cllr William Herbert declared an interest in the pond on the Village Green.

Cllr David Gibbon declared an interest in the Gravel Extraction.

Cllr George Wright declared an interest in the Gravel Extraction.

4. Correspondence

Nothing to Report

5. Information and Reports

Nothing to Report

6. County and District Councillors Report

a) Essex County Council Report

Cllr Derek Robinson reported that the 127 bus has been removed from the bus service residents are concerned about the bus being removed. There is a bus that all residents can now use. This bus is called the hopper bus.

b) Tendring District Council Report

No Report

7. Policing and PCSO

Cllr L McWilliams Read out an email from Andrew Hastings. The letter said that he has requested a copy of the PCSO agreement which he will drop in to the office as soon as he receives the copy. Sergeant Hasting reported that Mr Filer will be employed in April as our new PCSO he will undergo two weeks training at HQ Mr Filer will be working in Great Bentley full time at the end of May. The email said that Great Bentley Frating and Elmstead will be covered as of 17th April by Weeley police office. The sergeant will be is Sharon Wyatt; the new constable is PC Andy Hughes.

b) Highways

Cllr L McWilliams reported that there maybe some delays in the highways work as the contract of the company they were using has now come to an end

c) War Memorial (Repair and renovation)

Cllr W Herbert reported that he had a meeting with Chris Morris regarding the repairs to the War Memorial. Cllr W Herbert discussed with the council the information that had been sent to him by Chris Morris. Council decided that the outer surround area to the War Memorial is to be completed first. All Council agreed. Letter to be sent to Mr Morris requesting he supply quotes from Shipp Builders and Moorcroft builders for the works to be carried out.

d) Foot Paths - Thorrington Road - Lamp Connection

Nothing to Report

e) Affordable Housing

Nothing to Report

f) Village of the Year Competition

Cllr L McWilliams reported that she will be having a meeting with the working party on Wednesday 12th April 2006. The working party will discuss how they are going to show the presentation. The Presentation will take place in the Mitchell room in the village hall.

g) Licensing Village Green – Conditions for use of the Village green

Cllr L McWilliams reported that TDC has now accepted the Terms and conditions for the use of the Village Green. Cllr L McWilliams asked the council to look through the new conditions for the use of the Village Green and to give there approval... The Council agreed with the conditions.

h) Great Bentley in Bloom

Nothing to report.

j) Gravel Extraction

Nothing to Report

8. Railway- Crossing and signalling

Cllr L McWilliams reported that the level crossing gates in the centre of the village are to be changed. Cllr L McWilliams said that this has given cause for great concern; there are Health and Safety Issues because of the close proximity of the Primary School to the north side of the level crossing. Cllr L McWilliams said that the village hall each weekday is the venue for the play groups and mother and toddlers group, she said that with so many children using the crossing, the Parish Council is very concerned. Council decided that the Clerk and Cllr L McWilliams will write to Network Rail expressing their concerns with copies going to other relevant authorities and our local MP. The letter must ask the following questions:-

1. **Are full barriers with skirts to be used?**
2. **What are the statistics regarding safety where a school is immediately adjacent to a crossing?**
3. **What is the proposal regarding radio signalling. Does this mean tall masts and at what height and where are they to be sited?**
4. **What consultation meetings are there to be carried out?**
5. **Will the up grading mean that the railway station is no longer to be manned?**

Council agreed.

9. Finances

a) Cheque Signatory Mandate

Clerk Janet Bloomfield reported that she has not heard from the Bank regarding the Cheque Signatory Mandate.

b) Bank Account

Geoffrey Catchpole (Retired Clerk) reported that the Great Bentley Parish Council has £15,516.35 in the Bank Account. The Interest this month is £11.46. There is £16,000.00 in an Investment Account. The Interest is working at 3.84%.

c) Items of Expenditure for Approval

The schedule of expenditure for April was submitted to Council, Schedule attached. Proposed to be approved by Cllr Edward Fox and seconded by Cllr William Herbert. Council agreed.

10. Clerks Report

Clerk Janet Bloomfield reported that the TDC Forward Plan 54 1st April 2006 –31st July 2006 was now in the office. If Cllrs would like to look at the Forward Plan this would be kept in the Community Resource Centre.

Clerk Janet Bloomfield handed out leaflets for training courses for Cllrs. (Retired Clerk) Geoffrey Catchpole Expressed how important these training courses are to a Parish Cllr.

11. Committee Reports

a) Allotments

Cllr William Herbert reported that the Allotment has two new tenants. Plot numbers 76 and 35. New contracts are to be sent out by the clerk.

b) Planning

The Council received a written report of the meeting of the Planning Committee. Council agreed with the action taken and the views expressed.

c) Play Area

Cllr Lynda McWilliams reported that The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) will be making their annual inspection some time in May 2006. Cllr L McWilliams said that the play area committee have for sometime now considered replacing the springy animals as they are worn out and have been repaired for some time. Cllr L McWilliams said that the play area committee would also like to purchase more rubber mats to cover the space between the equipment as the grass in these gaps is wearing away and could become a safety issue if allowed to continue. Cllr L McWilliams asked the council for their approval and if they could go ahead with this during the new financial year. Council agreed.

d) Village Green Management Committee**i) Village Map**

Cllr William Herbert reported that the Green Committee discussed the proposed village map and felt that the best position for it would be next to the existing TDC information box. It would be approximately 4ft wide to hold the necessary information and would be best in an aluminium case. Cllr William Herbert said that the parish council would have to find the true owner of this piece of land and to get some prices for the casing. Cllr William Herbert said that the Green Committee felt that the council should ask TDC if they could spruce up their box, as it is looking a bit worn.

Cllr Peter DeVaux Balbirnie will ask TDC to tidy up their notice board. The Green Committee will find out the cost of a new notice board. Council agreed.

ii) Vandalism

Cllr William Herbert reported that there has been some vandalism on the green during the past month. He said that a bin has been destroyed at the end of Station Road and that the plastic centre part and the top of the bin have disappeared and need replacing. Clerk Janet Bloomfield is to fill in an insurance claims form to replace the bin. Council agreed

iii) FC Youth team

Cllr William Herbert reported that the Green Committee were very impressed by the good work that the Football Club regarding the training of youngsters every Saturday. He said that they are concerned though at the effect this is having on the grass. Cllr William Herbert said this is more noticeable on the triangle where the parents park their cars and at the end of the junior pitch. He said that the grass on these areas is of very poor quality and has little root structure. Cllr William Herbert said that it has been suggested that another pitch is marked out as an alternative playing area but the Green Committee are afraid that this will just encourage twice as many matches. Cllr William Herbert asked Council if the Green Committee can arrange a meeting with those who run the junior training sessions to discuss these issues. Council agreed.

iii) Signs

Cllr William Herbert asked council if they would give there permission for the clerk to write to the occupants of the Poplars explaining that the signs about parking will soon be removed now that the grass is growing again and that in the long term the council would like to install double kerbs in that area.

Village Green Reports

a) Spraying

Cllr William Herbert reported that Bentley Contracts have been contacted and they will carry out their work soon.

b) Goal posts

Cllr William Herbert reported that the goalposts have been ordered and will be delivered to Micksfield during the week of 10th April 2006.

c) Verge Cutting

Cllr William Herbert reported that Morton Contracts have been asked to cut the verges along the approaches to the village before the judges come for the best kept village competition. Cllr W Herbert said they will start this on May 1st.

d) Village Green Meetings

Cllr William Herbert reported that the Green Committee has decided that will in the future hold their meetings at 7.30pm on the Thursday before the Parish Council meeting. Some members are finding it difficult to attend on Sunday Mornings.

12. Other Reports

a) TDALC

Cllr Lynda McWilliams reported that AGM meeting is to be held on the 24th April 2006. Cllr L McWilliams said she has received an email from David Hines. The email said that copies of the proposed TDALC changes to the Constitution were distributed and Mike Brown outlined the changes he was seeking to this document in order to enable the Association to represent town and parish councils at the LSP. Extract from the TDALC's last minutes: - Nick Turner stated that Frinton and Walton TC had had a 30-minute debate on this, but had been told by their clerk that they could not legally delegate any of their powers to another body. After some discussion Richard Colley proposed that a clause be inserted giving the chairman authority to act on behalf of the meeting (TDALC) which would over come the problem. This was seconded by J Heaney and agreed by the meeting. Mike Brown is to write the new clause to be considered at the AGM. Cllr L McWilliams asked the council for her with their permission to act on behalf of the Parish Council. Council said they were not sure about the law. Council asked Cllr L McWilliams to check the information first.

b) Foot Paths

Nothing to report

c) Transport

Nothing to report

d) Caretakers Report

Clerk read out the following report from David Tyler (caretaker).

This month we have seen every now and again litter thrown down on the green, usually after a weekend. Worse than that the litter bin at the top of Station road on the green was literally taken apart and the top half not seen again. I also understand that a dog fouling sign near Chris Aplins house was vandalized and also cars had been driven over the green again.

Round about the same time, a car in Pine close had its wing mirror pulled off and thrown on the ground near my home and my feature plant in the front garden had its frost wrapping removed, part of it left in the road.

A minimal amount of fly tipping has taken place this month, although once again the clothing bank area has seen an amount of rubbish left by the side of it.

A condensed version of my February report in the village magazine was a good idea as it reminded people that they are able to inform me of any problem that needs taking further.

Play area this month, although being used, has been free of problems, although I understand that the area around the old forge has become a trouble spot with youths hanging around there.

Chairman.....

Date.....