



RETTENDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday, 13th May 2025 at Rettendon Memorial Hall, Main Road, Rettendon

Present: Cllr Joe Parsad, Chair
Cllr Hazel Dale-Evans, Vice Chair
Cllr Diane Francombe
Cllr Roy Hart
Cllr Keith Marshall
Cllr Catherine Nixon
Cllr Barbara Wright
Cllr John Williams

Mrs Emma Terris, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Cllr Sue Dobson, Essex County Council

Apologies were received from Cllr Dave Phillips

There were eight members of the public present (including 4 Co-option candidates).

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Dave Phillips.

3. To agree the Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

4. To receive the Chairman's Annual Report

The Chairman's Annual Report was received as follows:

Good evening to you all,

It is a pleasure to see you here this evening! We hope that you will want to share your thoughts with us rather than you just hearing from us.

There is no Agenda per sé because the meeting is specifically for you, the Parish. Just so that we are clear, what that means is that this is a residents meeting so you can talk with us, ask us questions and hold us to account. We are here to listen and try to solve any issues you bring to our attention.

We are fortunate tonight to have Cllr Sue Dobson, Essex and City Councillor. She has kindly given her time to attend tonight to hear your issues and concerns.

Before I open the floor for your questions, I would like to give you a general overview of what we as a PC have been doing over the past 12 months.

I'd like to thank my fellow Parish Councillors who have continued to work hard this last year, they do the job voluntarily and always have this village and your best interest at the heart of what they try and achieve.

We also employed Emma Terris, as our new Clerk in July 2024. I am delighted to report that she has settled in very well and is enjoying being a part of this community.

Over the past 12 months, the following items are just a few things the PC with the help of some of you as parishioners or trustees have achieved.

The Bell Fields

The Parish Council created a play area for the children of the parish as well as an adult fitness course and you will have seen that the trustees have added more play equipment and a picnic table there too.

The last 12 months have been eventful and as most of you know several tonnes of fly-tipped rubbish has been dumped on the Bell field car park area. due to the gate being left open. Trustees have also lost the football club hire, and as a result a significant amount of funds have been lost too as well as the lack of any maintenance of the field, these things have been sadly neglected by the trustees, However, those six trustees are now coming to the end of their 4-year term of office.

In preparation of the appointment of their replacements, three new trustees were appointed in April this year and since their arrival, the field has been cut in readiness for summer. We will be looking for volunteers to apply later this year as the old trustees finish their terms of office and conduct a proper handover.

Sonters Down

Has been one of the most neglected areas of the Parish and the 'Friends of Sonters Down' was established earlier last year with the help of a couple of Councillors, to act in an advisory capacity. Over the past 12 months or so, some of those friends have surveyed the Residents and sought to ask what the older children wanted on their open space. We are happy to report that a Zip Wire was the choice and this is scheduled to begin installation after the school half term, so early June and will be completed by the time summer holidays begin. Councillors are delighted that we have been able to support residents and friends of Sonters Down in getting this done.

Remembrance Sunday

Once again was celebrated with Fran Theobald from the Living Memorial Centre presenting the Parish wreath on behalf of the community. Also, as most of you know, the Memorial Hall is the focal point of the village and the volunteers there continue to support the community

by providing the “warm hub” throughout the cold winter months by providing hot soup and bread in a cosy, friendly environment. Several of the Parish Councillors were able to join in the conversations. As last year, the team will be continuing to provide food throughout the warmer months with Teas, Coffee, Cake and Salad, all by popular demand. This is a perfect example of how the Memorial Hall Trustees manage the Hall and bring parishioners much needed support as well as different community events, another example of their work in the community is the VE day celebrations they hosted last Saturday. Great food.

This is a perfect example of how the Memorial Hall Trustees manage the Hall and bring parishioners much needed support as well as different community events, another example of their work in the community is the VE day celebrations they hosted last Saturday. Great food, great company and fantastic entertainment from the D-Day Dames.

It’s also pleasing that the once strained relationship between the Parish Council and Memorial Hall trustees is in the past. We are working together and the trustees agreed to allow the PC to have their base at the Hall once again.

As you know the PC meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month. All of you are invited to attend and we make these events as open and transparent as possible.

We have dealt with many issues over the last 12 months, The following are examples of some of those issues.

Community Safety:

Security Patrols: In response to rising concerns about local crime and limited police resources, the council decided on April 30, 2024, to continue its contract with S-Type Security. This service provides regular patrols across Rettendon, Battlesbridge, and Hayes Country Park, enhancing community safety.

Planning & Development:

Bell Public Car Park Proposal: On August 21, 2024, a re-submitted application for constructing a four-bedroom detached house in the Bell public car park was noted. The council acknowledged significant public opposition and committed to representing residents' views in its response. Thankfully the application was withdrawn and the PC are in the process of applying for the Public House to become a Valued Community Asset. We will keep you all informed of our progress. Uzbekistan

The Horticultural Show: is a major event of the village. Many of the parish councillors offer our support by helping out on the day in any way possible. It was again my pleasure to man the BBQ, with a great team of volunteers, I met many of you for the first time two years ago, and I look forward to meeting more of you this year too.

Our relationship with the Ward Councillors Paul Clark and Steve Davis continues to grow. They regularly attend our monthly meetings, keeping us informed about what’s going on at City level and how it may affect our community. We with them continue to hold Chelmsford and Essex to account on behalf of residents.

5. Visiting District/County Councillors and Questions from Members of the Public

A resident thanked the Council for funding the zip wire for Sonters Down. This is something that has been worked upon since 2016 and finally this is moving forward.

A resident who is a representative from Woodham Road expressed concern in regard to the condition of the footpaths and the speed motorists are driving down the road. The resident advised that they have submitted 15 complaints, which have been recorded by Chelmsford City Council regarding this issue. Photographs showing the condition of the road are available to view. The Chair asked the resident to email the photos to the clerk who will forward them to Cllr Dobson. Cllr Dobson also advised that they could email her directly.

Cllr Dobson encouraged residents to contact her directly with any issues they have regarding the footpaths and roads.

A resident raised concerns regarding the speed motorists travel down the Woodham Road and added that the speed camera is located within overgrown bushes. Cllr Dobson advised that she has been contacted regarding this issue and in terms of arranging for a speed assessment, this is something that will need to be arranged through Highways.

A resident who lives in Rettendon expressed their concern regarding the parking around the housing estate due to parents dropping and picking up their children from the school. Cllr Dobson advised that parking restrictions could be put in place and this is something the Parish Council can investigate further.

Cllr Wright advised that the village does not have enough carparking facilities. The only carpark is the Village Hall which gets full. Cllr Francombe advised that the cricket team have an area to park on the other side of the field which they can access from Church Chase, which does not appear to be used.

A resident enquired whether there has been any update on the proposed power station at Bradwell. Cllr Dobson advised that she has not heard anything.

A resident enquired about the installation of solar panels in a nearby fields. Cllr Dobson confirmed that there will be three solar farms in East Hanningfield Parish and along the A1245 opposite the Toby Cavery.

Cllr Hart advised that he would like a 20-mile hour speed limit introduced between the two bridges in Battlesbridge which is a black spot for accidents. Cllr Hart advised that he would be willing to contribute to the cost of this. Cllr Dobson advised that different colour road surfaces are no longer permitted due to the cost of installing and maintaining the road surface.

Councillors raised the issue of a houses being built within the parish that were built without mains sewage. Work is currently underway to try and redirect the drainage to a pumping station within Rettendon. Cllr Dobson advised that she would follow this up.

With no further comments, the Chair thanked Cllr Dobson and residents for attending and also expressed his appreciation to the Parish Councillors for work undertaken during the course of the last year.

6. **Date and Time of next Annual Parish Meeting**

Tuesday, 12th May 2026 at 7.30 pm

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