*Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Council: Jennifer Spear*

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 **Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 18th April 2024 at The Village Hall, Plough Road Great Bentley Colchester CO7 8LG**

Present: Cllr. P. Dennitts Cllr. P. Harry Cllr. B. Herbert Cllr. K. Plummer Cllr. R. Taylor Cllr. F. Edwards Cllr. J. Jepson Cllr. G. Wright TDC Cllr. L. McWilliams

In attendance: Mrs Jennifer Spear (Clerk) and 42 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for absence: To receive apologies for absence**

Cllr A. Goggin and Cllr. J. Wharton have sent their apologies, these were accepted by the council.

**2. Annual Parish Meeting Minutes: To agree the minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting held on 25TH May 2023 as a true record of the meeting for signature by the Parish Council Vice Chairman of this meeting (previously circulated)**

**Resolved** that Cllr. R. Taylor proposed that these were a true record, seconded by Cllr P. Harry, these were signed by Cllr. P. Harry.

**3. To receive the Annual Report from the Parish Council Chairman, read by the Chair, Cllr. P. Dennitts.**

The Chair, Cllr. P. Dennitts read this out to all in attendance, this will be added to the Parish Council Website.

**4. Speaker: John Hall, discussing Climate Change and the loss of Biodiversity, plus positive practical ideas of what we can do in our community to help reduce the impact of these important issues.**

The speaker gave a brief description of Pace and what they do including the Earth Festival last year which was

attended by over 3000 people, they currently have around 20 different projects such as, a community solar scheme,

adapting to climate change, biodiversity projects plus educational projects.

He also gave an overview of the climate issues that are affecting everyone worldwide and some help that we can

give as individuals. Last year was the first year was more than 1.5degrees above what it was in pre-industrial

times. This doesn’t sound very much but the impact on our environment is global aswell as local, looks at the

flooding that has been occurring locally and much more frequently, plus the high winds that are having are also

having an impact.

There has been a 25% decline in the number of insects in our area, which has meant that the swallows and house

martins that used to be seen ready to mass migrate are now all gone, or heavily reduced.

There are now Climate action plans within government and feeding down, locally to Tendring District Council and

Essex County Council, along with Great Bentley Parish Council, who have their own 20-point Climate action plan.

The message here is that we can make a difference with our life choices, looking at labels on food and buying local

and sustainable choices. The energy in our home, of our energy suppliers and where this energy is coming from, use

green providers who invest in renewable energy. Good Insulation in your home, 30cms is needed in your loft,

external wall insulation or can you have solar panels to generate your own energy. Travel – can you cycle more?

Maybe there are opportunities to encourage more cycle ways and footpaths, walking to school, can you choose a

train for your holiday rather than a plane? Choose open flowers rather than closed ones when you plant flowers in

your garden.

We don’t need a few people doing sustainability perfectly we need millions of people doing this imperfectly.

The parish council will put an electronic version of this on the website.

To contact PACE please head to their website: [www.pacemanningtree.org.uk/plastic-free](http://www.pacemanningtree.org.uk/plastic-free)

**Questions from Members of the public:**

* Why did the fish was up on the beach on St Osyth?

 *John Hall advised that he doesn’t know about this but it could have to do with the problems that have been raised with contaminated water.*

**5. South Side Project Consultation**

Cllr. P. Dennitts proposed moving this to end of the meeting for a further discussion if needed, all in agreement.

**6. Grant Funding Update**

Updates were given from Great Bentley Pre-School, Great Bentley in Bloom and Great Bentley Good Neighbours who have all received grants from the Parish Council in the last year.

**7. Agenda items for discussion and voting – (*all agenda items submitted by local people beforehand or taken from suggestion board.)***

Cllr. P. Dennitts advised that there are comment slips on all the tables for those present to be able to write on with their suggestions for the parish council, to be returned this evening. Also to remind everyone that at any time they can also contact the clerk.

**8. Pride of Great Bentley Awards**

This year the parish council have received more nominations than ever before from members of the parish so

resolved to give out multiple awards.

Cllr. P. Dennitts and Cllr. P. Harry presented the nominees for people who have been nominated for their specialist Commitment to the village:

Allison Hunt

Andrew Whitefield

Daniel Shed

Mary and John Barber

Cllr. P. Dennitts and Cllr. P. Harry presented awards for the people who have been awarded for their Lifetime Commitment to the Village:

Beverly Adams

The Bovingdon Family

Rita Baverstock

Cllr. P. Dennitts and Cllr. P. Harry presented Great Bentleys first award ever Special Recognition Award, as the parish council received an unprecedented number of nominations for one particular nominee, “the heart of Devere” to Carol McDougall.

Cllr. P. Dennitts and Cllr. P. Harry presented some final recognition, for The Village Caretaker Bobby McWilliams who will be retiring at the end of May, he was presented with a plaque in thanks for his work while he has been in the role.

**5. South Side Project Consultation**

Cllr. P. Harry introduced the South Side Project, citing the reasons for the need to make this track a bound one rather than unbound one, because of the loss of village green where the track has widened over the years due to the deterioration of the current surface.

Cllr. J. Jepson gave a description of the projected project that the parish council are hoping to carry out this year. Which includes a bound tarmac surface, a barrier to prevent the surface being used as a rat run and bollards along the edge to prevent people driving over The Green.

Cllr. P. Dennitts advised that we are beginning the further consultation process of this project to spread the word about this project as far as we can, this will be being discussed at our parish council meetings, we welcome all comments and feedback as this is a major project.

Full details of this can be found on the Parish Council website at, [www. greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk/southside-track-working-party/](https://greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk/southside-track-working-party/)

No questions were raised by those present.

**7. Close of meeting – set date for Annual Parish Meeting 2025.**

**Resolved –** that the date of the next Annual Parish meeting is to be held on 17th April 2025

There being no further business the Annual Parish Meeting was closed at 20.09

………………………………………………………signed………………………………..date