

LITTLE WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held online on 2 June 2020 at 7:30pm

Present: Councillors Edith Robertson (Chair)
Antony Kingham
Michael Eve
Rupert Watson
Clerk Suzanne Walker
City Councillor Councillor Knight
County Councillor Councillor Aldridge
Two members of the public were present

Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

20/70 Apologies

Received from Councillors Denny, Williamson and Tron

20/71 Declarations of Interest

None.

20/72 To consideration and approval of Minutes 5 May 2020

The minutes of the meeting of 5 May 2020 were formally **approved** by Councillors as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman.

20/73 Public Forum- to receive any representations from the public

Councillor Knight reported that the City Council staff have adapted well during the Covid 19 situation. There has been a drop in income from leisure facilities and car parks by £4-5 million. £1.6 million has been received from Government. The local plan has now been adopted. The biggest impact on this Parish will be the new Garden village with 3,000 houses by 2036 and a further 2000 beyond that

20/74 New Planning Applications

20/74.1 20/05537/CAT - 43 The Street, Little Waltham - T1 Willow - located at back of property - pollard at approx. 8-9m in height - Reason: To reduce some of the weight above the decayed areas within the main scaffold limbs/stem –

No Comments

20/74.2 20/05535/CAT - 98 The Street, Little Waltham - Rear garden - Northern Boundary; Yew - Crown raise to 3m. Horse Chestnut - Crown reduction up to 2m or previous pruning points. Eastern Boundary; Holly - Crown reduction up to 2m or previous pruning points. Central within garden; Cedar of Lebanon - Crown raise to 3m – **No comments**

20/74.3 20/00620/FUL - Five Elms, Wheelers Hill, Little Waltham - Front porch extension and part two storey, part single storey side/rear extension – **No comments**

20/74.4 20/00686/FUL - Woodhouse Lodge, Woodhouse Lane, Little Waltham - Proposed side/rear extension and alterations to existing dwelling- **No comments**

20/75 Planning Results

The following planning results were **noted** -

- 20/75.1 20/00472/FUL - Croxtons Mill, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham - Retrospective application for demountable pergola, timber decking and minor soft and hard landscaping – **Permitted**
- 20/75.1 20/05531/CAT - 59 The Street, Little Waltham - T1 Ash - crown reduce by up to 3m max - Reason: to maintain at reasonable height as is close to house and road – **No objection**

20/76 Correspondence

20/76.1 Essex County Council

- 4/5/20 Information regarding recycling centres
- 4/5/20 Essex Highway bulletin
- 14/5/20 Notification of re-opening of recycling centres
- 14/5/20 Information on improvements to cycle and pedestrian access ways
- 18/5/20 Information on phased opening of schools
- 19/5/20 Information about opening of Country Parks
- 27/5/20 Update regarding plans for north east bypass and railway station

20/76.2 Chelmsford City Council

- 14/5/20 Notification of consideration by the Council of the Local Plan.
- 14/5/20 Information regarding new Mayor of Chelmsford

20/76.3 Other

Various bulletins and information regarding Covid 19

20/77 Amenities report

20/77.1 To consider the ongoing closure of play facilities

Further to Government guidelines the tennis court was opened on 23 May 2020 with signage erected to state that the area may only be used for tennis and just one singles match may be played subject to social distancing. The children's play area remains shut and will not be opened until Government guidelines and advice permit this to happen.

20/77.2 To consider the Annual play area inspection

The report was considered. The report suggests some upgrade to paths and to wet pour. Quotes will be considered once the Covid 19 situation has abated. New chains have been obtained for the swings. One set was incorrect and will be returned to be replaced with the correct sizing.

20/77.3 To consider the issue of dog poo bags and dispensing the same

Further to the plastics pledge passed by Chelmsford City Council that authority is no longer providing a free supply of dog poo bags to Parishes. Councillor discussed whether the Parish Council should now use its money to purchase dog poo bags for the benefit of residents. It was **agreed** that if a person can afford to purchase a dog,

they can afford to purchase dog poo bags and be responsible for their pet and thus money from the Parish precept will not be used to purchase such bags.

At this point in the meeting Councillor Aldridge joined the meeting.

20/77.4 To consider repair of tennis court fencing

It was agreed to move the item to the next agenda as quotations are still awaited as a result of the recent damage caused to fencing around the court and the gate itself where people had climbed into the court whilst it was locked.

20/77.5 To consider whether additional short-term litter picking required

In common with other local areas there is a dramatic increase in litter. The Clerk had spoken to DW Maintenance regarding increased visits. DW Maintenance will be attending the Parish more frequently during summer to water the flower tubs so could also carry out litter picking during such visits at a cost of £15 an hour. At present they litter pick once a week but this week had to attend twice more regarding additional litter and broken glass. Councillors considered that it is important to keep on top of the litter situation and **agreed** to request that DW Maintenance carry out litter picking an additional two times a week whilst visiting for gardening and for this to be for a short-term basis over this summer 2020 period.

As Councillor Aldridge had not had an opportunity to speak in the public session the Chairman invited him to speak at this point. He stated that there is another footway repair scheme launched by Essex County Council so he suggested that any areas that require attention in the Parish be reported to him. Attendance at the recycling centres is now returning to normal levels. Country Parks are now open subject to social distancing rules. He is awaiting a response on action that may be taken regarding damage to rural roads following the Sheepcotes roundabout roadworks. Libraries will now open for a limited service in a phased manner. Chelmsford will be included in the first phase and in the second phase it is expected that Broomfield and Writtle will be included. There are limitations in that PCs will not be available for use. Each Essex County Council Councillors will be given £10,000 to distribute not just to Parish Councils but also for community groups and he will pass the information on for circulation. Speed awareness courses are now being held online and it has been noted that there has been an increase in speeding traffic generally.

20/78 Financial Matters

20/78.1 Payments for approval

The following payments were **approved** –

Payee	Item	£	VAT	Total
Myers Scott Ltd	setting up new emails	30.00	6.00	36.00
Seagrave Inspections	Play area inspection	105.00	21.00	126.00
Clerk	Expenses	176.38	12.07	188.45
J A Clements	Internal Audit	100.00	0.00	100.00
DW Maintenance	gardening and litter picking	427.00	0.00	427.00
DW Maintenance	grass cutting (Inc. cricket field)	575.00	0.00	575.00

20/78.2 Current account balance to be reported at the meeting.

The Clerk reported the balance as at 2 June 2020 is £55,017.81

20/78.3 To consider the internal auditor’s report

The internal auditor’s report had been circulated and it was **noted** that no substantive issues had been raised and the certificate had been signed and a clear report provided. Councillors thanked the Clerk for her work in achieving this.

20/78.4 To consider and approve the Annual Governance statement on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

Councillors considered and **approved** the annual Governance statement on the AGAR form.

20/78.5 To consider and approve the Parish Council accounts for yearend 31st March 2019 and the Accounting statements on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

Councillors considered and **approved** the accounts for year end 31st March 2020 and also considered and **approved** the accounting statements on the AGAR form.

20/78.6 To confirm the dates for the notice of exercise of public rights.

It was **agreed** that the date for this period will be 15th June 2020 to 24th July 2020.

20/79 Clerk’s Report

The Clerk reported as follows –

1. On 13th May 2020 I attended a further online consultation event regarding the ongoing process to update flightpaths at Stansted airport which will go out for a public consultation in 2021
2. A number of residents who belong to the Memorial Hall committee volunteered to take part in the leaflet drop as did members of the evangelical church so I referred them to the Channels Residents group to assist.
3. I have attended virtual meetings regarding bus service issues – in March I reported to you regarding the bus shelter upgrade project and on 22nd May I attended a meeting regarding on demand services
4. In view of the current Covid 19 situation the Parish magazine will not be published in June but the next issue will be published in September 2020
5. On 7th May 2020 I attended a webinar regarding emotional resilience in relation to the public sector and on 13th May I attended a webinar regarding Operation London Bridge.
6. Chelmsford City Council has amended its dates for Play in park which are provisionally booked for the mornings of 4th and 27th August 2020. This is subject to final confirmation of the City Council as to whether the event will proceed which will be advised in July.
7. Each month I will keep you updated with matters that do not require action at this point in time by the Parish Council but need to be noted as ongoing. This month I can advise

Item	Actions awaited	Date raised
Local Highway Panel – 30mph zone at Chatham Green loop	Local Highway Panel has included this in potential works list for a feasibility study	December 2016

Repair of three bridges over streams in the Parish	Matter referred to Chelmsford City Council to resolve.	February 2018
Community Governance Review	Chelmsford City Council wish to progress within a larger review of boundaries in the City Council area	April 2019
Local Highway Panel – application for a crossing at Ash Tree Corner	Submitted to the Highway Panel on 13 November 2019 – validation awaited	November 2019
South Essex Parking Partnership – application for yellow lines on the junction of the B1008 and The Street by the school	The South Essex parking Partnership are recommending that yellow lines be painted on both junctions and the matter is due to go out for public consultation shortly.	November 2019

The report was **accepted**.

20/80 Annual Review of Policies

The following policies were reviewed as follows –

Standing Order – **no amendments**

Financial Regulations - **no amendments**

Freedom of Information Act scheme – **agreed** to add in the list some recently approved policies

Code of Conduct - **no amendments**

Media Policy - **no amendments**

Data Protection Policy - **no amendments**

Document Management Policy – **no amendments**

20/81 Affordable Housing project

Councillor Robertson and the Clerk had attended a meeting on Zoom with a representative from RCCE and two representatives from the Chelmer Housing Partnership regarding this ongoing scheme. A note of the meeting had been circulated to Councillors. The recommendation is to carry out a further public consultation on the matter to bring the scheme to the attention of residents and to advise residents that they need to be on the housing list at Chelmsford City Council to be eligible for the scheme. The City Council has recently updated its list and a number of residents from this Parish has dramatically declined. There is a need to demonstrate that the scheme will be viable. The proposal is to carry out this consultation via the minutes, the Parish Council's social media outlets and a notice on the notice boards. The Parish Council does not have the facilities to carry out another leaflet drop. The survey can be completed online and if a particular resident cannot do so hard copies and a reply-paid envelope can be provided. In addition, the issue can be highlighted with local community groups to bring to the attention of their members. It was **agreed** to proceed in that manner and it was noted that for the scheme to be fully viable the Housing partnership would like one extra unit (total of four).

20/82 To consider the issue of a Health and Wellbeing Plan

The Clerk had drafted and circulated a draft health and wellbeing plan. Councillor Williamson had provided some additional links for community support to add into the plan. The wildlife trust area will not be included as it is not managed by the Parish Council. There is a suggestion to mention community litter picks in the plan. Also, a suggestion to include more information about the defibrillator although the concern is that it is down to the 999 service to decide if a person is suitable for defibrillation and it is they who provide the instructions on how to use it so no further publicity is required in that regard. The Clerk will update the plan and bring it back to the July meeting for further discussion.

20/83 To consider response in relation to proposals for DRT bus services

The Clerk had attended a presentation from Essex County Council regarding a plan to set up a Demand Responsive Transport mini bus service for the rural area north of Chelmsford including this Parish which would be similar to an Uber service in that it can be booked via an App when required. It is available to those that live within the area shown on the map for journeys anywhere in the defined area. The Clerk had circulated the presentation to Councillors. It is available 24/7 and between 10pm to 6am to Chelmsford Railway station as no buses run at that time. Essex County Council are bidding to the Department for Transport for funding for two years with the intention that it is then commercially viable and is asking Parishes to support the bid. Councillors discussed how it may be of benefit to access the GP surgery in the village and the Primary school which could reduce traffic travelling into the village centre and considered it to be a good idea. A question was asked about the use of bus passes and it was noted no decision has as yet made as to whether they can be used and on pricing in general although the indication given is that it will be more expensive than a bus but less than a taxi. Councillors **agreed** to support the bid. It was noted that the timescale is that by August Essex County Council will know if initial approval has been granted whereupon detailed business planning will go ahead with an intention that the scheme comes into effect in April 2021

20/84 To receive update regarding Cricket Club and leasehold arrangements

The Clerk had spoken to an officer at Chelmsford City Council for an update. At the last meeting it was advised that Chelmsford City Council said they would change the locks and repossess the Pavilion. Since that time a representative from the Cricket Club had been in contact with the City Council and agreed to surrender all legal rights in the land and asked for a couple weeks to clear the Pavilion whereupon they would hand back the keys. This should have been done by the end of last week but the officer had not been into the Civic Centre over the last few days so needs to check. Once the keys are received the City Council can move on with the lease negotiations with the Parish Council to include the area of the cricket field. The Clerk had also been advised that work would take place shortly to replace the concrete blocks with a wooden access gate and pedestrian gate. Councillor Knights agreed to speak to officer to assist with the prompt progression of issues.

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was **agreed** that the public be excluded and instructed to withdraw for this agenda item. Once

members of the public including City and County Councillors had logged off the following agenda item was discussed.

20/84 To consider update on Operation London Bridge procedures

Councillors considered the existing protocol and procedures. In particular it was considered that if the period of mourning falls across the period of mourning the meeting will be postponed. Social media issues also considered and the updated protocol was agreed.

20/85 Matters to be raised by members for the next agenda.

Affordable housing, cricket club and lease issues, health and wellbeing quote to repair tennis court. Councillor Watson indicated he would submit a grant application for consideration in relation to the repair of the Church clock.

Meeting concluded 8.17pm