

LITTLE WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd December 2021 at 7:30pm in the Tufnell Hall

Present: Councillors Edith Robertson (Chair)
 Antony Kingham
 Melanie Williamson
 Rupert Watson
 Jo-Ann Tinson
 Richard Allen
Clerk Suzanne Walker
8 members of the public were present
Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

21/201 Apologies

Received from Councillors Scott and Tron and from City Councillors Steel and Knight.

21/202 Declarations of Interests

Councillor Tinson declared a non-pecuniary interest in the planning application for land adjacent to Montpellier Villa and will vacate the room for that item.

21/203 To consider the co-option of a new Councillor

As a result of Councillor Eve resigning a casual vacancy had arisen which had been advertised as legally required and the Council is now at liberty to co-opt a new member. Mr John Burrow has submitted an application demonstrating his eligibility. Councillor Kingham proposed that Mr Burrow be co-opted as a member of the Parish Council which was seconded by Councillor Watson and **agreed** by all Councillors. Mr Burrow signed the acceptance of office form and joined the meeting.

21/204 To consider and approve the Minutes 2 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting of 2 November 2021 were formally **approved** by Councillors as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

21/205 Public Forum- to receive any representations from the public

Six residents from Chatham Green spoke to object to the planning applications in relation to the barns opposite Whitbread's centre. Their concerns related to the fact that the development is outside the village envelope and they are concerned it will open the floodgates for development in the area. They stated that the area is a small hamlet with a single-track road with limited passing places and that additional traffic will present a problem. Coaches bringing children to the charity at the Whitbread centre often cause issues such as any more traffic along the road will be detrimental. In relation to the design for the houses there will be no gardens and the houses are set towards the back of the plot so very close to the existing properties one of which is listed. They also did not think the design of the houses fits in with the hamlet. They confirmed that they had submitted their comments to the City Council and they were reminded that they may also contact a local City Councillor as well.

A representative from the Channels Residents Association advised that the defibrillator has been dispatched and it is hoped to install it shortly and to arrange training.

He also raised the issue of a large number of HGV using the RDR due to road closures around the Boreham interchange that are due to be in place probably for another 18 months. He stated that there are around 250 lorries a day accessing the quarry. The lorries are loud and powerful and often travel along the road as early as 5am. Also, mess is left on the road which is partly adopted and partly still owned by Countryside.

He mentioned that the Association is looking to organise the purchase of a permanent beacon and will be looking to apply for a grant from the Parish Council.

21/206 To review the Parish Council representation protocol and Media policy

The updated draft of the representation protocol was considered and **approved** by Councillors.

21/207 New Planning applications

Councillor Tinson vacated the room for this item

21/207.1 21/02126/REM - Land North West of Montpellier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham - Approval of reserved matters application (landscaping) in relation to outline planning permission 20/01907/OUT - for the construction of 10 dwellings with associated access from Blasford Hill. The provision of landscaping details (included within the Landscaping Strategy Ref: 21002-101 Rev: D), includes evergreen boundary hedging to the perimeter of the site, ornamental hedging to the front of plots, strategic native tree planting and the creation of wildflower grassland around the swales at the entrance of the site – Councillors **agreed** to comment that in view of the updated terms of the National Planning Policy Framework to suggest that instead of fencing dividing the properties that hedges are utilised.

Councillor Tinson returned to the room.

21/207.2 21/02190/CUPAQ - Barns Opposite Whitbreads Business Centre Whitbreads Farm Lane Little Waltham - Determination as to whether the prior approval of the local planning authority is required for the proposed change of use from Agricultural Buildings to 5 Dwellings (Class C3) – Councillors considered the fact that the proposed development is in the rural area outside of the defined settlement boundary and that development policy DM8 applies in that such development should enhance the area and not harm the intrinsic character of the area. The comments from residents were also considered. Councillors **agreed to object** to the application on the basis of the detrimental impact additional traffic would have, the fact it is single track road with limited passing places and thus an unsuitable road to accommodate additional development. Also, the design of the proposed dwellings is not in keeping with the area and would have a detrimental impact. It was also noted that by removing two Dutch barns would make the appearance imbalanced and that there is a lack of public transport in the area.

21/207.3 21/02203/CUPAR - Barns Opposite Whitbreads Business Centre Whitbreads Farm Lane Little Waltham - Determination as to whether the prior approval of the local planning authority is required for the proposed change of use from Agricultural Buildings to a Flexible Use comprising Class E(g) and/or B8 Use Classes – Councillors **agreed to object** on the

basis as set out above of detrimental impact in relation to additional traffic and harm to the intrinsic character.

- 21/207.4 21/02104/FUL - Site North of Rolphs Cottages Blasford Hill Little Waltham - Construction of Fisherman's Lodge and landscaping – it was noted that the proposed property is in the green wedge and referred to policy DM7. It was **agreed to object** to the application as it out of character with the area and the design of the house would stand out from the existing rough cast houses in the area. To note that the costs estimated to build the house are optimistic and also to state that if permission were to be granted then the use of the house should be tied to the Fisheries and the house should not be sold separately.

21/208: Planning Results

The following results were **noted** -

- 21/208.1 21/05222/TPO - 100 The Street, Little Waltham - T2 - Horse Chestnut - Crown reduction by up to 6m (approx. 1-2m below previous cut points) - Reason - The tree is causing the thatched roof across the road to deteriorate and reduction would give extra clearance – **Refused**
- 21/208.2 21/01718/LBC - Peverells Farm, Domsey Lane, Little Waltham – Replacement porch – **Granted**
- 21/208.3 21/01610/FUL - Southwood House, Woodhouse Lane, Little Waltham - Part demolition of existing garage, construction of new single storey extension and new entrance porch. Internal alterations, installation of bi-fold doors to rear elevation and alterations to basement – **granted**
- 21/208.4 21/05619/CAT - 106 The Street, Little Waltham - Marked G1 - Apple - Rear garden, adjacent to boundary wall - Reduce the height and spread of the tree by 0.5-1m, prune extended laterals, shape over - Reason - To define the shape; Marked T2 - Acer - Rear garden - Reduce by 0.5-1.0m and shape over canopy - Reason - To define the shape; Marked T3 - Laurel - Rear garden - Reduce the height and spread of the tree by 0.5-1.0m / back to previous pruning points; Marked G4 Dead trees x 2 - Rear garden - Fell to ground level; Marked T6 - Bay - Rear garden - Reduce height of the hedge by 0.5m to define shape. (Marked G5 Hornbeam x 3 are trees to be planted) – **No objection**
- 21/208.5 21/01968/ADV - Plot two Eagle Way, Little Waltham - Installation of internally illuminated x4 fascia signs. Internally illuminated x4 totem signs and non-illuminated x3 totem signs – **Granted**

21/209 To consider representations in relation to the Chelmsford City Council Duty to Co-operate consultation

No Comments.

21/210 Correspondence

21/210.1 Essex County Council

21/11/21

Correspondence regarding Highway meeting

21/210.2 Chelmsford City Council

11/11/21

Information about Chelmsford Garden Community website

17/11/21	Invitation to Mayor's Christmas Carol event
23/11/21	Mayor's newsletter
21/210.3 Other	
16/11/21	Information about closure of General's Lane roundabout
18/11/21	Invitation to Hospital Trust AGM
And usual bulletins	

21/211: Amenities report

21/211.1 To receive update on play area upgrade projects

The Clerk confirmed that the work to repair the small path from the car park to the gate into the rear of the Memorial Hall had been completed and a lady from the Good Companions had thanked the Parish Council. In addition, the wet pour has been replaced around the slide and rocking horse and minor works to repair play equipment completed. All that is left is for the path in the play area to be levelled and that work is expected shortly.

The 3 quotes for the tennis court upgrade have been updated with information on lead times as well and will be on the January agenda to consider. Chelmsford City Council consent is expected shortly to consent to the position of the outdoor gym equipment.

21/211.2 To consider quotes received for grass cutting contract

Four quotations had been obtained and were considered and discussed by Councillors. On the proviso that they will accept a one-year contract as the Parish Council has not used them for grass cutting services before, Councillors **agreed** to award the contract to JCM Services.

21/211.3 To consider quotes received for village maintenance

Three quotations had been obtained and were considered and discussed by Councillors. Councillors **agreed** to re-appoint DW Maintenance for this work. Councillors asked that some issues were brought to the attention of the company, specifically the fact that the bus shelters in the Chatham Green area are in need of attention and that the rose bushes are in need of attention as they are looking straggly. Regarding the flower tubs there was discussion on the type of flowers in the tubs and whether there could be a more colourful display but it was acknowledged that volunteers may be required to water the plants more frequently so the Clerk was asked to make enquiries of the gardening club as to whether they may be able to assist.

21/211.4 To receive update on Parish Tree Warden scheme

The Tree warden scheme had been considered in the past but due to lack of support from the Tree officer at the City Council no further action was taken. However, the Clerk has now heard from the new Tree Officer who is able to offer support and training and is asking if Parishes can nominate a volunteer tree warden for their Parish. The Clerk was asked to include an article in the next edition of the magazine so see if a volunteer can be found.

21/212: Financial Matters**21/212.1 Payments for approval**

The following payments were **approved** –

		£	VAT	Total
Payments made				
Agenda item 21/196.1				
Chelmsford City Council	Rent for playing fields	500.00	0.00	500.00
Agenda item 21/164.1				
Mortimer Contracts Ltd	play area surface works	3,188.00	637.60	3,825.60

Payments to be made

Clerk	Salary (Nov.)	660.50	0.00	660.50
HMRC	PAYE (Nov)	187.59	0.00	187.59
Essex Pension Fund	Pension contributions (Nov)	251.77	0.00	251.77
Clerk	expenses	84.00\	9.68	93.68
Mortimer Contracts Ltd	minor repairs to equipment	235.00	47.00	282.00
Good Companions	grant payment	220.00	0.00	220.00
Perspective Landscapes	Gardening	100.00	20.00	120.00
DW Maintenance	Gardening and litter picking	367.00	0.00	367.00
BHIB Ltd	fee for pavilion insurance	98.11	0.00	98.11

21/212.2 To consider subscribing to the Essex Playing Field Association

In view of the support available from the Association and the fact that the subscription is £30 per annum it was **agreed** to join the Association and pay that subscription

21/212.3 Bank account balances to be reported at the meeting

As at today's date the current account balance was reported to be £72,117.98 and the saver account £2,386.32

21/213.4 To consider review of Clerk's hours of work

The Clerk had been asked to provide a review of her hours so that she does not have to claim overtime and her hours can encompass all her tasks providing certainty for both her and the Parish Council. Upon receipt of her report Councillors **agreed** to increase the Clerk's hours to 11 hours a week forthwith.

21/212.5 To consider draft budget

Following discussions at the previous meeting the draft budget had been updated and it was noted that there is no need to make any increases in allotment rent. The updated budget was considered. It was noted that the Band D payment will increase by the sum of £1 for the year. The budget was agreed by all Councillors and the Chairman signed the precept form to enable submission to the City Council.

21/213: Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported as follows –

1. Chelmsford City Council has agreed to the installation of a new dog bin and to add it to the rota. For reasons of consistency the City Council will purchase and install the bin which works out a little cheaper than if the Parish Council were to do so.
It was noted the cost will be £280 including installation which was acceptable to Councillors as it was cheaper than the estimated costs if the Parish Council were to purchase and install.
2. I contacted the Tree officer at Chelmsford City Council regarding concerns over the soundness of trees on the green area behind the War Memorial and adjacent to Winkford Close. An inspection was carried out which resulted in the officer agreeing to arrange work to remove branches caught in the trees and monitoring of the trees generally as they are Ash trees.
3. Following attendance at the Highways meeting on 19th November I have reported the outstanding pavement issues to Cabinet member Lee Scott for attention as they have been outstanding for some time.
4. The Councillor email accounts have been upgraded as agreed. It transpires that the Clerk email account storage can't be upgraded to the higher amount without all other accounts being upgraded thus increasing costs further. I have therefore asked Myers Scott to propose solutions including looking into the Microsoft solutions and I will report back at a future meeting.
For the time being the Clerk will use an 'archive' account and consideration will be given to other solutions in due course.
5. 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 – application for a crossing at Ash Tree Corner	LHP has advised that they statistics show that a crossing cannot be justified but they are considering a refuge to assist those crossing the road – cost estimate £7,500 – project in design phase which may include a filter land for Chelmer Avenue.	November 2019
Resolve issue of electric pole at Blasford Hill allotments	Essex County Council is negotiating a Wayleave consent	March 2020
Local Highway Panel – application for speed reduction along Back Lane, Stand out chicanes in Brook Hill and access only provisions to the village centre	The Parish Council has responded to questions from the LHP including request for downgrade of PR2 status of road and reduction in speed limit of Back Lane to 40mph– in reliance on old speed survey the officer will be recommending a village gateway to the panel	December 2020
Essex County Council Bus shelter project	The Parish Council has confirmed ownership status of the shelters and awaiting licence documentation	December 2020
Local Highway Panel applications	Application for 40mph buffer Zone on approach to 30mph limit to be shown with	April 2021.

	a 'village gate'. The village centre from the War Memorial to the school at The Street, and Brook Hill from the junction with The Street to Church Hill to be a 20mph area with 'wig wags by the school – the officer will be recommending a village gateway and is investigating the suggestion of wig wags	
Essex County Council	The issue of the removal of trees and the installation of white posts along Back Lane – response awaited from Essex County Council as to their enquiries and whether this will result in any action being taken.	April 2021
Byway 51	Essex County Council issued a 6-month closure notice in relation to the byway and an update on the status of the byway is therefore expected in March 2022. It is understood any further action would need to be initiated by the landowner	August 2021
Glebe Field Right of Way	Application for right of way to be added to the definitive map – it has been advised that it is on the list for assessment by the Essex County Council legal team	September 2021

The report was otherwise **noted**.

21/214: Affordable Housing project

It was noted that there has been a change of personnel at the Housing Association but otherwise negotiations continue with the Diocese in relation to the most recent plans.

21/215: To consider the issue of traffic in the Parish

21/215.1 To receive update on attendance at Essex County Council meeting.

The Clerk had provided a note of the meeting and Councillor Kingham also provided information and that there will be a further meeting in the new year. There was considerable discussion about commissioning a traffic report. Councillor Burrow to enquire about a suitable firm to provide such a report and bring the information to a future meeting so it may be considered further by Councillors prior to agreeing to appoint such a person. The Clerk was also asked to approach the RCCE to see if they can recommend such a company.

21/215.2 To receive update on issue of traffic regulation order adjacent to the Surgery Brook Hill

It was noted that the Surgery are not proceeding with their extension at this point in time so will not be requesting a TRO. Having discussed the matter it was **agreed** that the Parish Council will not be submitting an application for a TRO in that area.

21/215.3 To consider representations regarding issues raised in relation to the use of the Radial Distributor Road.

The representations that had been made by the representative from the Channels Residents Association were discussed and it was agreed to contact Councillor Steel to highlight the concerns and in particular the issue of heavy lorries using the road in

the early hours and leaving mud and mess on the road and ask that he supports those residents regarding that issue. Also, to bring the matter back at the next Parish Council meeting.

21/216: To receive update in relation to premises licences for events at Wheeler's Farm, Wheeler's Hill, Little Waltham

Councillor Robertson will be attending the hearing scheduled for 3 December 2021 to represent the views and submissions that had been made by the Parish Council in relation to the request for the licence to be revoked.

21/217: To receive update regarding recreation grounds leasehold arrangements

It was noted that the lease has now been completed and the pavilion added to the Parish Council insurance policy. The Clerk will be collecting the keys tomorrow and arrangements are being made to read meters and sort out commercial rates and request a discretionary rebate.

There are existing personal licences regarding garden use which will be updated and another resident who has placed pots on the grass. It was agreed to request that the area is enclosed so that there is clarity of the area to be used and to enter into a personal licence with that resident. It was agreed to suggest an annual rent of £20 per licence per annum.

It was also agreed to include an article in the magazine to confirm the use of the area.

21/218: To review current arrangements for the Parish magazine

Councillors are content with the contents and format of the magazine and Councillor Tinson agreed to assist the Clerk in finding some more advertisers to assist in defraying the costs.

21/219: To consider and approve Parish Council nominated representative to the Poole and Aleyn charity

Councillor Watson confirmed that the constitution of the Poole and Aleyn charity permits the Parish Council to nominate two representatives to the charity. The charity is asking for the Parish Council to support the appointment of Alison Bates which was **agreed** by all Councillors.

21/210: To consider representations in relation to the Essex County Council Bus Service Improvement strategy

The Clerk had attended an online meeting with Essex County Council who had explained that within the ongoing strategy they are asking each Parish to highlight needs, issues and make suggestions to encourage higher use of buses. Councillors **agreed** to feedback the following information – that the regular bus into town which is well used in the Channels section of the Parish is extremely unreliable. The number 70 bus travels through the middle of the village and it would be preferable if it could be a single decker in view of recent damage caused by double decker buses. Real time information would be useful and it was noted that some information on the app does not correspond to information at the bus stops and needs to be improved. It is understood that an 'uber' type bus service is due to be introduced soon and Councillors are supportive of such a service that can respond to local need. As for encouraging use going forward it was noted that bus fares are very high when

compared with Transport for London and if they were to be reduced could encourage higher use.

21/211: To receive update in relation to the situation with Glebe Field

It was noted that the Parish Council has been approached with a request from the land owner's agent if it is still interested in a licence in principle and what the proposed use of the area would be. Councillors **agreed** that in principle and subject to the precise terms and conditions, the Parish Council is still interested in a licence for the field and that the purpose would be to maintain it as a space for villagers to enjoy as at present in view of the number of public rights of way in the area and that arrangements would be made to cut the grass periodically. The Clerk will feedback the information to the agents and highlight the fact that the Parish Council would be a reliable tenant.

21/212: Matters to be raised by members for the next agenda.

Play area project, RDR and Wheeler's Farm

Meeting concluded at 9.29pm