

# LITTLE WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Little Waltham Parish Council held on 6 February 2024 at 7:30pm at the Memorial Hall, Brook Hill, Little Waltham

Present: Councillors      Antony Kingham (Chairman)  
   Richard Tinson  
   Rupert Watson  
   Emma Cunningham

Clerk                              Michelle Harrison

Three members of the public was present.

### **24/19:            Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Burrow, Godfrey, Allen and City Councillor Steel.

### **24/20:            Declarations of Interests**

No declarations of interest were registered.

### **24/21:            To consider and approve minutes**

#### **24/21.1           Minutes dated 2 January 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of 2 January 2024 were formally **approved** by the Councillors as a correct record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

#### **24/21.2           Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Meeting dated 10 January 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of 10 January 2024 were formally **approved** by the Councillors as a correct record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

### **24/22:            Public Forum - to receive any representations from the public**

The members of the public raised the following:

The footpath leading to the end of Braintree Road was overgrown – the Clerk would report this to the Maintenance contractor for action, as it is cut back twice a year.

The step that had been installed by the gate of the Playing Field in Little Waltham – this will be reviewed and added to a further agenda to work out the best way forward and how this can be improved.

Whealers Farm application – the dangerous behaviour of attendees, and how it detrimentally affects the local community. Councillor Kingham confirmed that the Parish Council have considered this matter very carefully and have submitted representations to the City Council. A Licensing Hearing will be heard and a Councillor will be attending.

Parking at the school is inconsiderate and dangerous. The Clerk has previously contacted the school regarding this matter, parking has been made available at Tufnell Hall and the Memorial Hall.

**24/23: To receive reports from Councillor’s attendance at external meetings**

No reports were received.

**24/24: Licensing Application at Wheelers Farm, Wheelers Hill**

The Councillors discussed application and confirmed that representations had been made to the City Council opposing the application. A representative from the Council will be attending the licensing hearing to ensure that the parish views are represented.

*A member of the public left the meeting.*

**24/25: Clerk’s Report**

The Clerk reported the following:

1. After all the issues with the Christmas tree The Good Elf has refunded 25% of the cost back to the Parish Council.
2. The Clerk attended the Minerals Local Plan Review online meeting. There are two proposed sites near to Little Waltham. The call was an initial update and to show how the sites are scored. A webpage will be created with all the information presented, showing the possible locations, which will be forwarded to the Councillors when available.
3. The Mailchimp sign up has been added to the homepage of the website. I have requested for Will at Myers Scott to update the design of this section of the page.
4. The allotment invoices have been issued and we have received some payments from allotment holders.
5. The organiser of the open gardens has been in touch to check if the Parish Council will support the classic car display on the playing field. Monies raised are for Farleigh Hospice. The event is planned for Sunday 23 June from 10:30 until 16:30. Please can you confirm if you are happy for use of the playing field for this event, so I can request this with the City Council – this was **approved** by the Parish Council.
6. Please note the following items are currently on hold:
  - a. Rebranding of the Parish Council
  - b. To consider planters in the village and surrounding the village gates
    - i. To receive update on 20s plenty initiative and further signage
    - ii. To consider the installation of Speed Indicator Devices
  - c. To consider crime in the village
    - i. To consider installation of CCTV in the parish
7. The below items are to note as ongoing, but do not currently require any action by the Parish Council:

Item	Actions awaited	Date raised
Local Highway Panel – application for a crossing at Ash Tree Corner	Project for a refuge to cross the road in design phase which may include a filter land for Chelmer Avenue – awaiting funding	November 2019
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	Applications for restrictions in the village centre – awaiting response regarding the Origin and Destination survey carried out in January 2023.	April 2021

Byway 51	Essex County Council extended the partial closure order until 15 April 2024	August 2021
Glebe Field Right of Way	Application for right of way to be added to the definitive map. Essex County Council have been directed to determine the Parish Council's application before 12 October 2024 by the Planning Inspectorate.	September 2021
Registration of the Memorial Hall with HM Land Registry	Await confirmation regarding the site plan from the Memorial Hall and confirmation in writing. Discussed in November 2021 and chased in October 2023.	November 2021

**24/26: New planning applications**

- 24/26.1 CC/CHL/110/23 - Chelmer Valley Park and Ride, Pratt's Farm Lane, Little Waltham, Chelmsford - Expansion and enhancement of Chelmer Valley Park and Ride, including an expansion of the car parking area to the north and east, pedestrian and cyclist improvements and the construction of a new substation. Together with other associated development, works and landscaping – **No comments**
- 24/26.2 24/05603/CAT - Hulmans Wheelers Hill Little Waltham Chelmsford - HG1 - Holly hedge - Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved), T1 Larch tree - Fell and treat stump with eco plugs (broadleaved) – **No comments**
- 24/26.3 24/00119/FUL - Sparrowhawks Main Road Little Waltham Chelmsford - Single storey rear and side extensions. Demolition of existing garage. Construction of new garage and side extension and replacement garden boundary wall. Addition of roof lights – **No comments**

The Councillors did discuss the above property and why planning applications keep being rejected. The Parish Council have not made any objections, so would like to understand the rational of the City Council. The Clerk will contact the Planning Department for clarification.

**24/27: Planning results for note**

- 24/27.1 23/01851/FUL - Annexe Rembrandt House Main Road Little Waltham - Single storey side & first floor extension over existing kitchen – Permitted
- 24/27.2 23/01799/FUL - Land South of The Wilderness Leighs Road Little Waltham - Demolition of existing stables and construction of a single storey dwelling with widening of access – **Permitted**
- 24/27.3 23/01828/FUL - Sparrowhawks Main Road Little Waltham Chelmsford - Single storey rear and side extensions. Demolition of existing garage. Construction of new garage and construction of replacement garden boundary wall – **Refused**
- 24/27.4 23/01747/FUL - Merefields Main Road Little Waltham Chelmsford - Excavation of pond with the erection of a cabin and jetty – **Refused**
- 24/27.5 23/01866/FUL - Silver Ash, Cranham Road, Little Waltham - Redevelopment of the existing site to provide 5 units consisting of B2 employment space with ancillary E(g) use and B8 open storage with associated parking, landscaping and infrastructure - **Refused**
- 24/27.6 23/01880/FUL - Glenroy House, Main Road, Little Waltham - Proposed replacement roof to existing single storey structure - **Permitted**

**24/28: Financial Matters**

- 24/28.1 Payments for approval

The below payments were authorised by the Councillors:

		<b>Net £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
Salaries and Expenses	January 2024	1052.28	0.00	1052.28
HMRC	January 2024	50.14	0.00	50.14

Essex Pension Fund	January 2024	335.23	0.00	335.23
Perspective Landscapes & Maintenance	December 2023	425.00	85.00	510.00
DM Payroll Services Ltd	Pension returns until March 2024	60.00	0.00	60.00
NPower	Cricket Field Electricity	47.01	2.35	49.36
Perspective Landscapes & Maintenance	January 2024	375.00	75.00	450.00

**Payments made by Direct Debit:**

		<b>Net £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
Anglian Water	Cricket Ground	51.72	0.00	51.72*
Bank Service Charge	Fee	18.00	0.00	18.00*

\*Payments made on 28/12/2023 and 31/12/2023

**Additional payment made to Essex Pension Fund – to include the charges and employee contributions:**

Essex Pension Fund	August – December 2023	354.13	0.00	354.13
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An additional payment of £354.13 was made on 17/01/2024, to include charges and employee contributions. Councillors provided email authorisation in advance of the meeting to prevent a fine for incorrect payment.

24/28.2 Bank Reconciliation Statement

The Council **approved** the balance of the accounts as at 31 January 2024, Unity Current Account at £143,674.29 and the Unity Instant Access Saver Account at £2,456.01.

24/28.3 To compare the Bank Statement figures with the Bank Reconciliation Statement

The figures for the bank statement and bank reconciliation statement were compared, the figures tallied so were signed by the Chairman.

24/28.4 To consider Quarterly Financial Report to 31 December 2023

The Quarterly Financial Report was approved by the Council.

24/28.5 To approve the proposed amendments to the allocation of funds within the 2023-2024 Budget

The Clerk had reviewed the 2023-2024 budget in detail compared to the current spending. The Clerk proposed amendments to the allocation of the budgets against the cost centres for the 2023-2024 budget. The Council noted that unexpected costs had arisen and that the budget should be reviewed and updated to reflect this. The Clerk commented that overall spending total was higher than set in the original budget for 2023-2024, and the additional costs would be met from CIL and General Reserves. The Council unanimously approved the amendments of the funds within the 2023-2024 budget and for this information to be included in the 2024-2025 budget for comparison purposes.

The approved amendments to the cost centres are attached as an appendix to the minutes.

24/28.6 To approve the update to the Financial Regulations to allow the use of a direct debit card

The Financial Regulations as amended were **approved** unanimously by the Councillors.

24/28.7 To consider the Data Audit

The Data Audit was reviewed and **approved** unanimously by the Councillors.

24/28.8 To consider the Financial Risk Assessment

The Financial Risk Assessment was reviewed and **approved** unanimously by the Councillors.

24/28.9 To consider a direct debit mandate for NPower, the electricity supply at the Pavilion

The Councillors agreed to a direct debit mandate for the electricity supply at the Pavilion. This will be signed by two of the bank signatories. The Clerk noted that a review of the electricity tariff was required at the Pavilion, this would be undertaken and presented to the Council.

**24/29: Memorial Hall**

24/29.1 Update regarding registering the Memorial Hall

Councillor Watson provided an update on registering the Memorial Hall. The Council noted that the next Memorial Hall Committee meeting was being held on 13 February at 7:30pm. Councillor Watson would investigate what is required for registration and obtain costs of surveyors, which will be presented to the Council for discussion and decision.

**24/30: Correspondence received**

**Essex Association of Local Councils**

Weekly e-bulletin

04/01/24 EALC Announcement - ECC Climate Action Annual Report 2022-23

12/01/24 EALC Legal Update

**RCCE**

04/01/24 Warbler Newsletter

**Other**

Chelmsford City Council bulletins and updates

CSW monthly newsletter

Emails from Mary Morris re the Glebe Field

04/01/2024 - Chelmsford City Council re Licencing Application for Wheelers Farm, Wheelers Hill

09/01/24 and 11/01/24 – Patient Participation Group updates

15/01/24 – Passenger Transport

15/01/24 – Army & Navy Sustainable Transport Package

**Residents**

Various emails from residents concerned about Wheelers Farm application

Emails from residents regarding David Lloyd – 01/01/24 and 07/01/24

**24/31 Annual Parish Meeting**

24/31.1 To agree the date and attendees for the Annual Parish Meeting

The Council agreed for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 2 April at 7:30pm. The Clerk will invite local groups and organisations to the meeting.

**24/32 Committees and Sub Committees**

24/32.1 Report from the Clerk for consideration

The Clerk had attended an SLCC course regarding best practice to set up Committees, Sub Committees and Working Groups. The Clerk reported the outcomes to the Councillors. It was **agreed** to set up Committee and Sub Committee for

Campaigns (to include traffic and pylons), Community (to include maintenance, events) and Capital (to include the Pavilion).

**24/33: Amenities**

24/33.1 To consider the quote for the new tennis net

The Councillors approved the quote for the new tennis net to be replaced.

24/33.2 To consider the storage box options for use in the multi use area for the tennis net

The Councillors discussed the best way to ensure that the multi use area can be used fully without the tennis net getting damaged. The costs of the storage boxes were considered, it was **agreed** for the storage box to be purchased and for the park maintenance contractor to install the storage box to the ground.

24/33.3 To consider the park equipment required from the park inspection and the cost for installing

The Councillors agreed for the rope replacement on the play area to be replaced. discussed the correspondence and proposed responses, some alterations were made and it was agreed for Councillor Kingham to submit the final response.

**24/34: Parish Maintenance**

24/34.1 Issues with street lighting and signs

Councillor Cunningham informed the Council of the many issues with the street lighting, especially the poles. There are also issues with the road signs which are illegible due to be dirty. Councillor Cunningham would create a list to provide to Highways.

Councillor Cunningham noted that the Little Waltham sign needed to be repainted. She would obtain three quotes which the Council can consider.

24/34.2 To consider renewing the grass cutting contract (expires 31/03/2024)

The Councillors reviewed the grass cutting specification and contract. The Councillors requested to meet with the contractor.

24/34.3 Additional rubbish collection and litter picking in the parish

The Councillors discussed the rubbish and litter picking and noted the increase in the amount of rubbish in the parish. It was agreed for a community litter pick to be arranged in the spring.

The Councillors agreed that the number of bin collections and litter picking should remain consistent throughout the year. The Councillors will review the litter picking contract and will meet with the contractor to discuss this further.

24/34.4 Review of the maintenance contract (expires 31/03/24)

The Councillors reviewed the maintenance specification and contract. This would be reviewed at the next meeting and the Councillors requested for a meeting to be arranged with the contractor.

24/34.5 Pavement issues and how they can be reported

The Clerk confirmed that issues with pavements should be reported to Essex County Council. Councillors agreed for a link to the reporting page to be added to the Parish Council's website.

**24/35 Glebe Field Footpath Application**

24/35.1 Update on the Footpath Application and to consider the response to the investigation queries

The Councillors discussed the correspondence and proposed responses, some alterations were made and it was agreed for Councillor Kingham to submit the final response.

The Clerk would provide an update once we have received a decision regarding the application.

**24/36 Parish events**

24/36.1 To consider the D-Day event - the costs associated and alternative ideas

The Council agreed that they would like to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day, however, the cost for purchasing a beacon was outside of the budget, therefore would consider other ideas.

**24/37: Traffic in the village**

Councillor Watson provided an update to the traffic in the village, a meeting has been arranged between the Parish Council, the Traffic Consultant, Essex Highways and Councillor Steel. The Parish Council will be updated with the outcome of this meeting.

**24/38: Matters to be raised by members for the next agenda**

Councillor Cunningham requested for the dates for Christmas event to be added to the agenda.

Meeting closed at 8:52pm.

Little Waltham Parish Council					
	Budget 2023 - 2024	To 31 December 2023	Proposed changes to cost centre for Budget 2023 -2024	Change	NOTES
<b>Administration</b>					
Office expenses	£ 5,000.00	£ 2,097.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 2,000.00	No foreseeable large office expenses are expected in this financial year
Postage & stationery	£ 370.00	£ 221.77	£ 370.00	£ -	
Member's travel	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Chair's allowance	£ 30.00	£ -	£ -	£ 30.00	
Insurance	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,153.28	£ 1,153.28	£ 46.72	No further insurance costs are expected for this financial year
External payroll provider	£ 150.00	£ 120.00	£ 240.00	£ 90.00	Increase due to the payroll provider processing and submitting the pension submissions, which are backdated to the date of joining the fund, as agreed at the January 2024 meeting
Office & other equipment & PPE	£ 50.00	£ 504.00	£ 600.00	£ 550.00	Defibrillator equipment
Clerk's travel	£ 450.00	£ 120.50	£ 250.00	£ 200.00	No expected long travel expected for this financial year
Clerk working from home allowance	£ 207.96	£ 176.33	£ 260.00	£ 52.04	Increase due to a change in the way the phone expenses are calculated and included in the allowance rather than as an expense, at a lower expenditure for the Parish Council
Audit fee	£ 550.00	£ 485.00	£ 500.00	£ 50.00	No further audits expected for this financial year
Hall hire	£ 300.00	£ 195.00	£ 300.00	£ -	Hall hire has increased per use
Training	£ 500.00	£ 998.50	£ 1,250.00	£ 750.00	Increase due to training for the new Clerk and new Councillor
Election costs	£ 400.00	£ -	£ -	£ 400.00	No election expected for this financial year
Subscriptions	£ 650.00	£ 681.89	£ 700.00	£ 50.00	Increase due to payment for SLCC membership, as approved at the December 2023 meeting
Parish magazine	£ 2,248.00	£ 1,900.66	£ 2,700.00	£ 452.00	1st issue costs for the next magazine due to be published in March 2024
Website & social media	£ 350.00	£ 148.88	£ 350.00	£ -	
Specialist advice	£ -	£ -	£ 2,700.00	£ 2,700.00	New cost centre, for specialist advice for Traffic Consultant. Funds to be allocated from General Reserve or CIL - Clerk to investigate
<b>Total Administration Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 12,466.98</b>	<b>£ 8,782.81</b>	<b>£ 14,373.28</b>	<b>£ 1,817.32</b>	
<b>Grants &amp; Donations</b>					
Poppy Wreath	£ 40.00	-	£ 40.00	£ -	Cheque for £40, but has not yet been cashed by RSL
Grants	£ 500.00	£ 442.76	£ 442.76	£ 57.24	Grants are only permitted to be considered by the Council in November, therefore this amount can be reallocated to another cost centre
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 540.00</b>	<b>£ 442.76</b>	<b>£ 482.76</b>	<b>£ 67.24</b>	
<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>					
New play equipment	£ 1,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 1,000.00	We do not have any new play equipment planned for 2023/24
Play equipment maintenance & inspections	£ 1,000.00	£ 2,323.61	£ 3,400.00	£ 2,400.00	The large increase was due to the block floor being repaired, the Clerk will investigate if this was authorized under CIL funds, or if it is expected to come from General Reserves.
Rent for playing fields	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00	£ -	
Play events	£ 550.00	£ 495.00	£ 495.00	£ 55.00	No further play events will be held in 2023/24
Grass cutting	£ 4,000.00	£ 2,300.00	£ 2,300.00	£ 1,700.00	The contract for grass cutting expires on 31/12/2023 and there will not be any further cutting until the new financial year.
Gardening, trees and litter	£ 8,000.00	£ 4,051.00	£ 5,500.00	£ 1,500.00	
Handyman	£ 200.00	£ -	£ 200.00	£ -	
Hard play	£ 1,500.00	£ -	£ 1,500.00	£ -	
War Memorial	£ 50.00	£ -	£ -	£ 50.00	
Street furniture	£ 400.00	£ 281.00	£ 300.00	£ 100.00	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£ 18,200.00</b>	<b>£ 10,980.61</b>	<b>£ 18,195.00</b>	<b>£ 2,005.00</b>	
Pavilion upgrade	£ -	£ 4,255.00	£ 4,255.00	£ 4,255.00	Cost for advice and plans which will be taken from the Earmarked Reserve for the Pavilion.
Pavilion running costs	£ 600.00	£ 1,024.35	£ 1,300.00	£ 700.00	Increase due to unforeseen costs for the Pavilion and the electricity supply
<b>Pavilion Sub Total</b>	<b>£ 600.00</b>	<b>£ 5,279.35</b>	<b>£ 5,555.00</b>	<b>£ 4,965.00</b>	
<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces Total</b>	<b>£ 18,800.00</b>	<b>£ 16,259.96</b>	<b>£ 21,750.00</b>	<b>£ 2,860.00</b>	
<b>Allotments</b>					
Water rates	£ 800.00	£ 524.00	£ 800.00	£ -	
Rent	£ 154.00	£ 197.00	£ 200.00	£ 46.00	Includes refunds to tenants for allotment rent, which is Earmarked. Increase is due to multiple tenants ceasing to rent their allotments
Maintenance	£ 500.00	£ 17.00	£ 500.00	£ -	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 1,454.00</b>	<b>£ 738.00</b>	<b>£ 1,500.00</b>	<b>£ 48.00</b>	
Special events	£ 600.00	£ 3,686.11	£ 3,600.00	£ 3,100.00	Donation received for £1,100.00 to pay for the Christmas tree, so results in an increase of £905.20 for special events which needs to be taken from General Reserves, as agreed at the Extra Ordinary Meeting in November 2023.
<b>Wages</b>					
Salaries (inc tax and NI)	£ 8,437.00	£ 8,164.15	£ 11,800.00	£ 3,363.00	It was agreed to increase the Clerks contracted hours at the January meeting to 18-20 hours per week. This will exceed the budget set for 2022/23, the additional funds will be covered by the reserves, if required. PO Box required to meet GDPR requirements
Pension contributions	£ 2,200.00	£ 1,107.82	£ 2,200.00	£ -	
PO Box	£ -	£ 396.00	£ 396.00	£ 396.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 10,637.00</b>	<b>£ 9,667.97</b>	<b>£ 14,396.00</b>	<b>£ 3,768.00</b>	
<b>Overall expenditure</b>	<b>£ 43,788.98</b>	<b>£ 38,488.81</b>	<b>£ 68,102.04</b>	<b>£ 11,716.08</b>	