

LITTLE WALTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Little Waltham Parish Council held on 14 May 2024 at 7:30pm at The Barn, St Martin's Church, Brook Hill, Little Waltham

Present: Councillors Antony Kingham (Chairman)
 Richard Tinson
 Rupert Watson
 Emma Cunningham
 Lallie Godfrey
 John Burrow

Clerk Michelle Harrison

6 members of the public were present.

24/71: To elect the Chairman for the Civic Year

Councillor Watson nominated Councillor Kingham to be the Chair for the year, which was seconded by Councillor Tinson and **agreed** by all Councillors. Councillor Kingham completed and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

24/72: Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Allen and City Councillor Steel.

24/73: Declarations of Interests

No declarations of interests were declared.

24/74: To consider and approve the Minutes 2nd April 2024

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

24/75: To consider Committees and Representatives for the Civic Year

The Committee structure, terms of refence, groups and representatives were reviewed. The membership of Committees were reviewed and agreed for the membership to remain the same. It was agreed for Councillors Burrow, Kingham and Godfrey to be members of the Capital Committee. It was also agreed for Councillors Cunningham, Godfrey and Kingham to be members of the Community Committee and Working Party.

The following representatives were **agreed**:

Play area inspections	Councillors Kingham and Allen
Poole and Aleyn link person	Councillor Watson
GP Patient Participation group	Councillor Allen
Primary school link person	Councillor Godfrey
Allotment link person	Councillor Kingham
Planning representatives	Councillors Kingham and Burrow
Memorial Hall	All Councillors

24/76: Public Forum - to receive any representations from the public

A member of the public reported that the hedging in Chatham Green was obstructing the road. The Clerk would report this to Highways.

Councillor Steel's report was noted.

24/77: To receive reports from Councillor's attendance at external meetings

No updates were provided.

24/78: Clerk's Report

1. Essex County Council have been in touch to confirm that potential site A55 – Sheepcoates Southern Extension has been removed from Essex Minerals Local Plan Review, at the request of the promoter of the site.
2. The Clerk submitted requests for street cleaning in Little Waltham. Love Your Chelmsford have confirmed that Streetcare Team will undertake the requests on/around 22nd August 2024.
3. The Internal Audit took place on 2nd May 2024.
4. The Clerk has been in touch with the Streetcare Team Manager regarding the bins in Little Waltham (which Chelmsford City Council are responsible for) to try and find out the process to apply for larger bins in Little Waltham.
5. The Clerk has finalised the Year End Accounts for discussion and agreement by the Councillors
6. Byway 51 – the partial closure of Byway 51 ended on 15 April 2024. The Clerk contacted Essex County Council who confirmed that paperwork to extend the closure had not been received to date.
7. The Clerk is in the process of updating the Speed Watch Group for Little Waltham. The Clerk has submitted the volunteer details to the Community Officer, information has been added to the website and a further advert in the quarterly magazine.
8. The Clerk has reported the hanging trees in Little Waltham and the brambles which are on the path at the bus stop opposite The White Hart pub.
9. The Clerk has reported the vegetation which is now growing into the bus stop and over the bus stop sign, at the bus stop next to The White Hart Pub.
10. The Clerk spoke to a resident and has reported the state of the road in Chatham Green, where the edge of the road has been worn away, vehicles are causing more of the road to erode and it is in a dangerous state.
11. The Clerk has received an update from RCCE re the CHP affordable housing rural exception site. CHP have been ready to progress the scheme with the support of CCC, but the Diocese have decided to re-review their options on the land. We will receive an update when it is available.
12. Play in the Park has been booked for Little Waltham for Friday 9th August 2024, with bouncy castles. The Clerk has requested for Little Waltham Park to be on all materials, to ensure that it is clear where the event is being held. There is a Play in the Park event in Great Waltham on 14th August and Chelmsford Garden Community on 25th July. The Clerk has requested use of the Memorial Hall toilets.
13. The Clerk has reported the broken gates on Footpath 23 in Little Waltham. Essex County Council replied and confirmed that as they are not an obstruction that no further action will be taken.
14. The Clerk has been investigating new website and email options for the Council and these will be reported in due course.

The following items are currently on hold:

- a. Rebranding of the Parish Council
- b. New website .gov.uk domain and associated email addresses
 - 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

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 – in discussion with Highways and Councillor Steel.	April 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. Awaiting outcome.	September 2021
Registration of the Memorial Hall with HM Land Registry	Discussions ongoing with the Memorial Hall, surveyors and solicitors in order to arrange first registration of the land.	November 2021

24/79: New Planning applications

- 24/79.1 24/00638/FUL – Chatham Hall Lodge, Braintree Road – Conversion and extension of existing detached garage to create residential annexe – **no comments**
- 24/79.2 24/00588/FUL – 7 Waltham Grange Close, Little Waltham – Single storey rear extension – **no comments**
- 24/79.3 23/00114/FUL – Radial Distributor Route 2, South of Wheeler's Hill – Detailed planning application to provide NRDR from Wheeler's Hill to NE Chelmsford Bypass
This is an amended application due to a minor change in the red line boundary for the NRDR, where it runs through Zone 2 to the east – no comments
- 24/79.4 23/00124/FUL and 23/00124/OUT – Zone 3, Chelmsford Garden Community – Application for hybrid planning permission at Powers Farm, Chelmsford – **no comments**
- 24/79.5 24/00557/FUL – Land South West of Brooklands, Sheepcotes Lane – alteration to existing access – **no comments**

Applications where delegated powers have been used:

- 24/79.6 24/00409/FUL – Land between Peartree Cottage and Daffodil Cottage, Braintree Road – Demolition of existing outbuildings and construction of 1 single storey dwelling and garage. Formation of new access – Parish Council submitted the same comments as for the previous application: **"Little Waltham Parish Council wishes to comment that it is concerned that any access to the proposed property should not conflict with the public highway especially as this is an area where there will be a new road configuration as a result of the construction of the Chelmsford North East bypass."**
- 24/79.7 24/05626/CAT – The Old Rectory, Brook Hill – T1 and T2 Laurels – coppice two trees – **no comments**

The Parish Councillors agreed with the above comments.

24/80: To note planning results

- 24/80.1 24/00313/FUL - Annexe At Little Gatsby Chatham Green Little Waltham - Proposed garage/cart lodge attached to the front of the existing annexe – **permitted**
- 24/80.2 24/00119/FUL – Sparrowhawks – Single storey rear and side extensions – **permitted**

24/81: To undertake annual review of policies

The Councillors reviewed the following policies and agreed no amendments were required: Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Freedom of Information, Media Policy, Complaints Policy, Vexatious Complaints Policy, Training Policy, Data Management Policy, Document Management Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Scheme of Delegation, Representation Protocol, Disciplinary and Grievance Policy.

Some minor amendments were made to: Grant Policy, Communication Policy and Investment Policy, the amendments were **approved** and the Clerk confirmed that the policies will be updated on the website.

It was **agreed** to remove the Health and Wellbeing Plan from the website and schedule of review as it specifically covered COVID so is not currently required.

Due to outstanding information the Website Accessibility Statement, Website Documentation Policy and Biodiversity Policy still need to be reviewed and will be presented to the Council in due course.

The Clerk noted that NALC Model Financial Regulations have recently been released, so the Clerk will review these and present them to the Councillors for consideration.

24/82: To confirm that the Parish Council is still compliant with the criteria for the Foundation award within the Local Council Award Scheme

The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council remained compliant with the criteria.

24/83: To consider use of the General Power of Competence

The Clerk noted that the Council still had the General Power of Competence until the next ordinary election. The Council unanimously agreed to continue to use this power.

24/84: Correspondence

Essex Association of Local Councils – Weekly e-bulletin

Essex County Council

- Love Your Chelmsford email confirming Streetcare team undertaking work in the Parish
- 11/04/2024 Update regarding Essex Mineral Site Plan – A55 Sheepcoates – Southern Extension

RCCE – monthly newsletter

Other

Chelmsford City Council bulletins and updates

Memorial Hall regarding subsidence

CSW monthly newsletter

08/05/24 – GHG Solutions email regarding subsidence at the Memorial Hall

08/05/24 – CCC Local Plan Consultation

24/85: To discuss the National Grid statutory public consultation and the Parish Councils response

Councillor Burrow provided an update and brief background regarding the pylons. The Councillors considered the draft response for the statutory public consultation. The Councillors unanimously **approved** the response. It was agreed for the Clerk to submit the response to The National Grid.

It was **agreed** to produce a leaflet to be distributed with the Parish magazine, if possible, to highlight the consultation to encourage residents of the parish to respond directly to the National Grid consultation. The Councillors agreed for this cost to be allocated to the publication/publicity budget code.

24/86: Amenities report

24/86.1 To receive an update on the planters

Councillor Cunningham provided an update on the planters. The Councillors did need to consider a rota for watering the planters.

24/86.2 To receive an update on the bins in the parish

The Clerk confirmed that she would undertake a review of the bins in the parish and understand the requirements to replace them and if there was any funding available.

24/86.3 To consider the clearing of the allotment at the Recreation Ground

This item was deferred.

24/86.4 To consider organising a litter pick on Saturday 21 September (World Clean Up Day)

The Councillors **agreed** to hold a community litter pick on Saturday 21 September, to meet in front of St Martin’s Church from 10am until noon.

The Clerk is awaiting to hear if McDonalds at Regiment Way will sponsor this event.

The Councillors also **agreed** to hold the next litter pick on 26 April 2025.

24/86.5 To consider the quotations for painting the Little Waltham sign and base

The Councillors considered the quotations to paint the Little Waltham sign and base. The Councillors agreed to the quotation from Michael Parperis. Councillor Cunningham would confirm this to the contractor.

24/86.6 To consider the quotations for painting the street light posts

Councillor Cunningham provided an update about the street light posts which required attention. The Clerk confirmed that the Assets Department from Chelmsford City Council had approved that the works can be carried out. The Councillors considered the quotations and agreed to the quotation from LAPD Painting and Decorating. Councillor Cunningham would confirm this to the contractor.

24/87: Financial Matters

24/87.1 Payments for approval

The Councillors approved the below payments:

		Net £	VAT £	Total £
Salary	April 2024	1,198.07	0.00	1,198.07
Expenses	April 2024	305.14	0.00	305.14
Essex Pension Fund	April 2024	399.47	0.00	399.47
HMRC	April 2024	130.64	0.00	130.64
DM Payroll	Payroll and Pension Admin	300.00	0.00	300.00
Perspective Landscapes	April 2024	400.00	80.00	480.00
Clear Councils	Annual Insurance	1,212.49	0.00	1,212.49
Distribute4u	Magazine distribution	80.00	16.00	96.00

Miss A C Wood (LetchWood)	Internal Audit for 2023-24	150.00	0.00	150.00
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Invoices paid as agreed at the April meeting

Longacres	Planters	210.78	42.16	252.94
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The Council noted the receipts received up to 30 April 2024:

Allotment fees	April	147.00	0.00	147.00
HMRC	VAT refund	4,658.82	0.00	4,658.82
Chelmsford City Council	Precept payment	27,676.00	0.00	27,676.00
Garden Licence	April	50.00	0.00	50.00

24/87.2 Bank reconciliation statement

The Council **approved** the balance of the accounts as at 30 April 2024, Unity Current Account at £166,251.10 and the Unity Instant Access Saver Account at £2,472.85.

24/87.3 To consider the Internal Audit report

The Clerk presented the Internal Audit Report, which was **approved** and agreed by the Councillors.

24/87.4 To consider and approve Governance statements within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Governance Statements on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return were considered and **approved**. The Statements were signed by Councillor Kingham.

24/87.5 To consider and approve the accounting statements within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The accounts for the year end 31 March 2024 were considered and approved. The accounting statements on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return were considered and **approved**. The Accounts were signed by Councillor Kingham.

24/87.6 To consider and agree the draft accounts

The draft accounts were considered and **agreed** by Councillors.

24/87.7 To confirm the dates for notice of public rights

It was **agreed** that the period for the exercise of public rights will be 3 June to 12 July 2024.

24/87.8 To review the signatories to the bank account

The Councillors **agreed** to retain the current signatories for the bank account, which are: Councillors Kingham, Burrow, Watson and Godfrey.

24/87.9 To review Direct Debit payments

It was noted that the current direct debits are: the registration to the ICO, bank charges to Unity Bank, Wave and Valda Energy, and it was **agreed** for these direct debits to continue.

24/87.10 Review of the Reserves Policy and to agree the reserve amounts

The Clerk had undertaken a review of the reserves at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. The Councillors unanimously **resolved** to set up the following new reserves:

Reserve name	Amount	Detail
Special Events reserve	£5,000.00	To help with community events
Planters' reserve	£222.11	Donations from the Christmas events
Specialist Advice reserve	£1,000.00	Memorial Hall registration advice and fees
Parks & Open Spaces	£1,000.00	To complete 2023/24 projects

The below reserves were agreed:

Rose garden	£2,472.85
Allotment deposits	£440.00
CIL funds	£84,126.34
Origin & Destination survey	£3,000.00
Pavilion project	£7,828.00
Emergency reserves	£16,278.06
General reserves	£20,500.00
TOTAL	£141,867.36

The Councillors reviewed the reserves policy and **approved** the amendment.

24/87.11 To consider the insurance renewal for the parish council

It was unanimously agreed to renew the insurance with Clear Councils, as the Council remained within the 3 year agreement period. The Councillors **approved** the cost of the annual policy.

24/87.12 To receive outcome of external audit for financial year 2022-23

The Councillors noted and **approved** the outcome of the external audit for 2022-23.

24/88: To consider the issue of traffic in the Parish

Councillor Kingham provided an update about the traffic in the Parish. Councillors Kingham, Watson and County and City Councillor Steel had met with Kemi Badenoch, MP, who was sympathetic to the situation and would be supportive to finding a solution.

Councillor Kingham noted that the Parish would need to be involved in a consultation before any scheme is agreed, but felt that positive steps had been made.

24/89: To consider the Pavilion

24/89.1 To receive update regarding Pavilion project

Councillor Tinson raised some proposals about how to progress the Pavilion. These ideas were discussed by the Councillors, it was agreed that further discussion and quotations were required.

24/89.2 To consider cricket on the playing field and use of the Pavilion

The Councillors discussed the use of the playing field and about using the Pavilion for cricket on weekends. The Councillors were open to this idea. The next stage would be to understand the costs and permissions that would be required.

24/90: Memorial Hall

24/90.1 To receive update on the Memorial Hall First Registration

Councillor Kingham noted that he would be attending the Memorial Hall Committee meeting on 28 May and would provide an update on this matter.

24/90.1 To discuss and agree the tree works required due to subsidence at the Memorial Hall

The Clerk updated the Councillors on the matter and the works that were required from the report. The Clerk would be requesting further quotations for the Councillors to consider.

24/91: Special Events

24/91.1 Update on the Christmas event

The Councillors reviewed the quotes for the brass bands for the Christmas event. It was agreed to proceed with the Essex Police Band, and the cost for the band was approved. The Clerk would confirm this appointment.

The Councillors considered the Christmas tree, and the mechanism to secure the tree. The Councillors considered the quotes for in-ground tree and cover and agreed to proceed with the galvanised box with lid, which would need to be concreted into the ground. The Clerk would circulate the design to Chelmsford City Council Estates Department for agreement, as the landowners.

24/92: Administration

24/92.1 To confirm booking of EALC courses

The Councillors unanimously agreed for the Clerk to book the EALC courses, without requesting each course individually, as long as within the training budget.

24/92.2 To discuss and agree for the Clerk to undertake the ILCA course

The Councillors unanimously approved for the Clerk to undertake the course and authorised to cover the cost of the course.

24/93: To review the Parish Council memberships

24/93.1 To review the current memberships

This item was deferred.

24/93.2 To consider renewing membership to RCCE

The Councillors agreed to renew the membership to RCCE, as their advice regarding the Pavilion may be helpful.

24/93.3 To consider renewing membership to Essex Playing Fields

The Councillors agreed not to renew the membership at this time.

24/94: Matters to be raised by members for the next agenda

No matters were raised for the next agenda.

The meeting concluded at 9pm.