#  Great Waltham Parish Council

The Parish Office, Great Waltham Village Hall (Houlton Hall), South Street, Great Waltham.

E Mail: clerk@greatwalthamparishcouncil.co.uk Website: e.voice.org.uk

**Clerk: W. Adshead-Grant Chair: S. Gilbert**

 **Vice-Chair: A. Martin**

Minutes of the meeting of Great Waltham Parish Council held on Monday 21st November 2022 at 7.30 pm in the Pavilion, Great Waltham Recreation Ground, South Street, Great Waltham.

22/1295 Chair’s Welcome

Chair: Gilbert

Councillors: Dunn, Huggins, Lockwood, McDevitt, Martin, Micklem, Palmer and Steel.

The absence of the Clerk due to illness was noted. It was agreed that minutes of the meeting would be prepared by the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair was pleased to welcome a number of members of the public.

22/1296 Apologies for absence.

Councillors: Jackson and Jenkins.

22/1297 Declarations of interests (existence and nature) with regard to items on the agenda and any request for dispensation

No dispensations requested.

22/1298 Public Participation Session (items do not need to be on the agenda)

Six members of the public attended the meeting and four specific issues were raised:

* In relation to a planning application (see item 22/1306 below), representations were received from residents in a neighbouring property. They objected to the application because of the industrial style of the pergola, that it is out of keeping with the character of existing buildings in North End, and is both visually intrusive and has the effect of blocking some light at their residence. The Council’s consideration of its position is detailed in 22/1306.
* Two residents highlighted an issue at their property in Brook Mead, Great Waltham in relation to the condition of nearby trees (the responsibility of Chelmer Housing Partnership (CHP)) which are affecting their telephone line in particular and are regarded as a hazard generally to buildings at the location. It is understood that while the residents have contacted CHP and have told the issue is being investigated, to date no action has been taken. The residents asked that the Council contact CHP on their behalf to request an update on the situation. The meeting indicated that the Council would write to CHP to advise that the issue had been raised with it and to request details of the current position in effecting a satisfactory resolution.
* Residents in Brook Mead reported alleged anti-social activities of a CHP tenant in one of the properties. The meeting advised that residents should follow the CHP complaints procedure to report any and all anti-social activities (which includes the ability to refer a matter to an ombudsman if not resolved to their satisfaction in the first instance). Cllr. Palmer offered to assist the residents through the online reporting procedure.
* Residents reported the non-functioning of a street light outside No.3 Brook Mead (to be distinguished from the other light in the area which has recently been repaired). Cllr. Steel agreed to make enquiries with the relevant City Council agencies to understand where responsibility for maintaining the light lies, and to flag the issue with the appropriate department accordingly.

22/1299 Report by County Councillor - Cllr Mike Steel

Cllr. Steel highlighted the budgetary pressures which can be expected in relation to the delivery of higher authorities’ services. He also drew attention to the holding response he had received from the Highways cabinet member in relation to the 20’s Plenty campaign.

22/1300 Report by Chelmsford City Councillor - Cllr Mike Steel

Cllr. Steel highlighted that a response from CHP in relation to parking restrictions at the Blossom Way development remains outstanding.

22/1301 Confirmation of the minutes of the monthly meeting held on 17th October 2022.

**Resolution: The minutes were confirmed.**

22/1302 Note the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 24th October.

**Resolution: The minutes were noted.**

22/1303 Note the minutes of the Extra Ordinary meeting held on the 27th October 2022.

**Resolution: The minutes were noted.**

22/1304 Note the minutes of the recreation committee held on the 7th November 2022.

**Resolution: The minutes were noted.**

22/1305 Local Planning Authority Decisions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [Reference](https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/registered/trackedApplication.do?action=display&orderBy=caseNo&orderDirection=ascending) | [Address](https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/registered/trackedApplication.do?action=display&orderBy=address&orderDirection=ascending) | [Status](https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/registered/trackedApplication.do?action=display&orderBy=status&orderDirection=ascending) |
| 20/02064/OUT | Strategic Growth Site North Of Woodhouse Lane Broomfield Chelmsford Essex | Pending Decision |
| 22/01526/FUL | Cherry Trees Chelmsford Road Great Waltham Chelmsford Essex CM3 1AF | Application Refused |
| 22/01925/FUL | Rosemary Cottage Mill Road North End Dunmow Essex CM6 3PE | Pending Consideration |
| 22/01113/SCOPE | Land At Moulsham Hall Moulsham Hall Lane Great Leighs Chelmsford Essex | Pending Consideration |
| 22/01455/FUL | The Rose And Crown Chelmsford Road Great Waltham Chelmsford Essex CM3 1AG | Pending Consideration |
| 22/01715/LBC | South Lodge Langleys The Village Great Waltham Chelmsford Essex CM3 1AH | Application Permitted |
| 21/00881/FUL | Broomfield Hospital Hospital Approach Broomfield Chelmsford CM1 7ET | Pending Decision |

The meeting noted the outcome/present position of these applications.

22/1306 Planning Consultations

1. Reference: 22/01925/FUL. Address: Rosemary Cottage Mill Road North End Dunmow.

Description of works: Retrospective application for a pergola above a raised pool.

**Resolution: The Parish Council strongly objects to this retrospection application. The structure is out of keeping with the character of both a rural setting in general and of North End in particular. It does not conform to a number of requirements documented in the North End Village Design Statement (VDS): viz. “The shape and scale of any new building will be determined by the existing [rural] character [of the village]” (p.11); “Building materials should be sympathetic to the original building […]” (p.13). In addition, the structure is visually intrusive and is likely to detrimentally affect the enjoyment of their property by neighbouring residents (again the North End VDS says “Extensions should not unduly affect adjoining residents […]” (p.13)).**

22/1307 Finance Reports:

* **Reserve Accounts** **£** **52,330.73**
	+ Allotment Deposits £ 600
	+ FE Variable Speed Camera £10,000 (hold for 12 months)
	+ FE Path £5,000 (time limited – March 2023)
	+ Parish Reserves £15,730.73
	+ Capital Works £21,000
* **Current Account**  **£ 16,130.45**
* Income CIL - £3211.59 (included in above figure)

**Total on Hand £ 68,461.18 (Before payments below)**

The meeting noted the reported figures.

22/1308 Payments for Approval

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Item** | **Budget heading** | **Payment** |
| 15.11.2022 | Pavilion - Shutters 50% deposit | General Reserve | £1,381.80 |
| 15.11.2022 | Handyman - Nuts & Bolts | Handyman Consumables | £6.99 |
| 15.11.2022 | Cllr Martin - Pavilion - Sealant | General Reserve | £69.90 |
| 15.11.2022 | Cllr Martin - Pavilion - Sealant | General Reserve | £27.96 |
| 15.11.2022 | JCM - 1/4 Charge | Grounds Maintenance Contract | £1,462.50 |
| 15.11.2022 | JCM - North End annual ditch works | Grounds Maintenance Contract | £168.00 |
| 15.11.2022 | Cllr Martin - Pavilion - Blind | General Reserve | £23.98 |
| 15.11.2022 | PKF Littlejohn - Audit Fee | Accountancy & Audit | £360.00 |
| 15.11.2022 | Cllr Martin - Pavilion - Sealant | General Reserve | £48.93 |
| 15.11.2022 | Amazon-HDMI Cable - pavilion | General Reserve | £10.88 |
| 15.11.2022 | Amazon - Chain for Playground | Handyman Consumables | £8.99 |
| 15.11.2022 | Amazon - padlock for playground | Handyman Consumables | £15.00 |
| 15.11.2022 | Amazon - adaptor - pavilion | General Reserve | £6.49 |
| 15.11.2022 | Staff Payments | Salary | £2391.58 |
| 15.11.2022 | Amazon - Soil for goal mouths | Handyman Consumables | £74.94 |
| 15.11.2022 | Amazon - metal spikes for allotments | Handyman Consumables | £76.94 |

Total spend £6,134.88

**Resolution: The payments were approved.**

22/1309 Monthly Bank reconciliation – Chairman of the F&GP

**Resolution: The bank reconciliation was noted at zero tolerance**

22/1310 Updates on the action tracker – All

The meeting noted the current position on outstanding actions. It was confirmed all committees have now decided to have separate tabs on the tracker spreadsheet for actions agreed at their respective meetings. The original generic tab will continue for actions arising from monthly meetings.

Cllr. McDevitt confirmed the annual maintenance work at Pump Green, North End has been completed (22/1237), so this item can be closed.

22/1311 Clerk’s Report and actions – The Clerk.

The meeting noted the information circulated prior to the meeting by the Clerk.

22/1312 Consider the request for the Parish Council to take part in the Christmas Tree festival and to authorise any costs associated – Cllr Lockwood.

**Resolution: The Council agreed to pay the £20 fee to enter the competition, with Cllr. Lockwood to lead the tree decoration activity.**

22/1313 The Recreation Committee proposes that the Council accepts the results of the Ford End Consultation 2 – Cllr Martin.

The meeting noted that each of the questions posed in the consultation achieved a majority preference.

**Resolution: The Council accepts the results of the consultation which will now be used to inform future decisions on the design and allocation of resources at Ford End Recreation Ground.**

22/1314 The Recreation Committee proposes that the Council brings forward one of the 2023 projects and purchases an 8ft storage container to be positioned beside the Pavilion at Great Waltham recreation ground – Cllr Martin.

Cllr. Martin detailed the advantages of installing the container in terms of consolidating the storage of Council assets at a more convenient location (principally for the handyperson) and freeing up storage space in the Pavilion itself.

The potentially unsightly nature of the container was commented upon, together with the need, in any event, to both establish any planning issues and engage with neighbouring residents who may be affected.

The motion as indicated was proposed by Cllr. Martin, seconded by Cllr. Huggins. The Council voted 7 to 2 in favour. Cllr. Steel asked that his objection to the proposal be noted.

**Resolution: The Council agrees to purchase an 8ft storage container to be positioned beside the Pavilion at Great Waltham Recreation Ground.**

**Resolution: The Council will make all necessary enquiries to establish the position in relation to securing planning consent, if needed.**

**Resolution: The Council will contact neighbouring residents to inform them of its intentions.**

22/1315 To review and agree the updated risk register (circulated prior to the meeting) – Cllr Gilbert.

The meeting noted the contents of the updated risk register.

22/1316 To agree whether the Council offers a response to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex’s Funding for Policing and Fire & Rescue Services 2023/24 survey – Cllr Gilbert.

While acknowledging the importance of adequate funding in this area, the meeting noted that the consultation lends itself primarily to responses from individual residents.

**Resolution: It was agreed not to submit a response on behalf of the Council, but to encourage councillors and parishioners to respond individually.**

22/1317 To agree whether the Council offers a response to ECC’s 2023/24 budget consultation – Cllr Gilbert.

Again, this consultation seems primarily geared to securing individual residents’ input.

**Resolution: It was agreed not to submit a response on behalf of the Council, but to encourage councillors and parishioners to respond individually.**

22/1318 To discuss and agree arrangements for the Council administered parking spaces at the Blossom Way development – Cllr Gilbert.

The meeting noted the current absence of a response to Cllr. Steel’s enquiry to seek clarification from CHP of its position (see 22/1300 above). It also discussed possible interpretations of the current terms and conditions in relation to the definition of commercial vehicles and whether their actual use is relevant (e.g. the circumstance where a vehicle is used exclusively for social, domestic and pleasure purposes, even though designated as a commercial vehicle).

**Resolution: The Council agreed to continue to monitor the situation in anticipation of receiving clarifications of permitted uses under the lease.**

22/1319 To agree the Council’s 2023/24 budget recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee of £90,971 an increase on the previous year’s budget – The Clerk

**Resolution: The Council agreed the proposed 2023/24 budget.**

22/1320 To agree the Council’s precept demand for 2023/24 recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee for £84,366. This is £89.66 per annum on a band D. This is £1.00 per month increase – The Clerk

**Resolution: The Council agreed the proposed 2023/24 precept demand.**

22/1321 To note feedback from the latest 20's Plenty presentation and agree the Council's next steps – Cllr Gilbert.

Cllrs. Gilbert and Martin reported on the latest 20’s Plenty presentation (webinar) as facilitated by EALC. The overarching objectives of the pressure group’s campaign are persuasive in that they seek to reduce traffic speeds and reduce the hazards when motor vehicles are more likely to mix with pedestrian and cycle traffic. However, whether the proposed solution (an Essex-wide 20mph default speed limit with agreed higher exceptions) is more a reaction borne of parish councils’ frustration in securing action for their specific local traffic/speeding issues, than a viable practical way forward is perhaps debatable. The webinar setting was not the opportunity for a more detailed dialogue to secure a firm assessment of how the campaign’s proposals would improve road safety in the parish.

**Resolution: It was agreed that organisers of the 20’s Plenty campaign in Essex should be invited to the Council’s next Highways & Transport Committee to secure a firmer understanding of any benefits to be obtained by the Council endorsing the campaign.**

22/1322 To note feedback from the RCCE Village Hall training course and to agree further actions in relation to the possibility of future involvement of the Council in the administration of Great Waltham Village Hall – Cllr Gilbert.

Cllr. Gilbert reported on the training course (run by the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE)) he attended with the Clerk on 3rd November 2022. The course highlighted the potential complexities involved with the Council being asked to take a more active role in either the trusteeship and/or management of the village hall. These would emerge more clearly when the intentions of current trustees are confirmed. The Council has no obligation to accept a request from the current trustees to become involved, but obviously it should be mindful of the impact to the community if the charity is unable to sustain the current level of access to the facility.

**Resolution: The Council to secure full membership of RCCE to obtain full access to its legal and best practice expertise in relation to village hall management and associated issues.**

**Resolution: The Council to initiate formal contact with the village hall trustees to understand the possible contexts of any future request to the Council for involvement in the administration of the village hall.**

22/1323 To agree an increase of hours for the Clerk/RFO roles, in accordance with recommendations provided by the Staffing Committee – Staffing Committee.

The meeting noted the work of the Staffing Committee to scrutinise and understand the range of activities undertaken in the roles and the increased work generated more recently by the administration in relation to hiring the Pavilion. The Staffing Committee recommends an increase to 25 hours per week. The Committee also identified the financial benefit of increasing hours against authorising overtime over and above the existing 21 hours per week. The Committee also recommended prior authorisation of future overtime requests.

**Resolution: Agreed that the hours for the Clerk/RFO roles to be increased to 25 hours per week.**

**Resolution: Agreed that all requests for overtime over and above the 25 hours per week to have prior authorisation from the Staffing Committee (or in their absence, the Chair).**

22/1324 To agree and authorise payment of hours of overtime completed by the Clerk/RFO – Staffing Committee.

**Resolution: The Council agrees to the payment of overtime hours already completed by the Clerk/RFO.**

22/1325 To agree the recommended local government pay scale increases and other terms of employment changes for Council employees – Staffing Committee.

**Resolution: The Council agrees to the implementation of the recommended local government pay scale increases and other terms of employment changes for its employees.**

22/1326 Agree the dates for 2023 meetings – The Clerk.

**Resolution: The Council agreed the proposed dates for 2023 meetings.**

22/1327 Discuss any additional potholes that can be added to the member led carriageway repairs – The Clerk

**Resolution: Councillors agreed to contact Cllr. Steel individually with the required evidence for any pothole repairs (which can include sunken drains) they wish to submit for consideration.**

22/1328 Discuss the statutory consultation on National Grid Anglia Green – The Clerk

The meeting noted the recent notification received from The Planning Inspectorate of the request made to it from East Anglia (GREEN) for its opinion as to the information to be provided in an Environmental Statement relating to the proposed development.

On the basis that the Council’s strong objections to the current proposals remain, the meeting delegated the decision on whether to respond to the notification to Cllr. Gilbert.

**Resolution: The Council agreed that Cllr. Gilbert should contact The Planning Inspectorate as appropriate to ensure the Council’s objections to the project as proposed are sustained.**

22/1329 Discuss and approve any items for publication to the public.

Cllr. Gilbert received retrospective approval for the Remembrance Sunday article already published in Parish News. These further items to be submitted for consideration in the next issue of Parish News and/or in social media platforms:

* Summary of this meeting and the December monthly meeting – Cllr. Gilbert.
* Outcome of and decisions made by the Council in relation to the second Ford End Recreation Ground consultation – Cllr. Dunn.
* Details of traffic survey – Cllr. Palmer.
* Proposals for updated equipment at Howe Street Recreation Ground – Cllrs. Huggins, Palmer, Jackson and Martin.

**Next Planned meetings (all in the Pavilion):**

Monday 12th December – Highways & Transport Committee

Monday 19th December – Monthly meeting

Monday 16th January – Monthly Meeting

Monday 23rd January – Finance and General Purposes Committee

Monday 30th January – Recreation Committee

The meeting was closed at 9.55 pm.

Cllrs. S. Gilbert/A. Martin