

Great Waltham Parish Council

The Parish Office, The Pavilion, South Street, Great Waltham.
Clerk, W J Adshead-Grant.

E Mail: clerk@greatwalthamparishcouncil.co.uk

Website: e.voice.org.uk

Minutes of the meeting of the Great Waltham Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th March 2024 at Ford End Village Hall, Ford End at 7.30 pm.

23/1772 Chair's Welcome:

The Chair:

- Acknowledged the interpretation of standing orders situation which occurred at the February meeting under item 23/1769, but that the Council should remain flexible and pragmatic to ensure it makes decisions quickly and decisively based on best advice.
- Requested that all members work to enable the resolution tracker document to be updated in advance of the meeting.
- Noted that Cllr Page has decided to resign effective from this meeting.

Chair: Gilbert.

Cllrs: Jenkins, McDevitt, Micklem, Stephenson, Martin, Steel and Jackson.

23/1773 Apologies.

Cllr Page – Resignation.

Cllr Bradley.

Cllr Palmer.

23/1774 Declarations of interests (existence and nature) with regard to items on the agenda and any request for dispensation.

Cllr Jackson and Cllr Micklem – Allotment items. 1787 to 1792 inclusive.

Cllr McDevitt – Planning – Near neighbour. Planning items 2 and 3.

Dispensation agreed for Cllr Jackson and Cllr Micklem.

23/1775 Public Participation session for any items regardless of its existence on the agenda.

Eight members of the public present.

- 1 member of the public for items 1787 to 1792 inclusive.
 - Allotment service charge. PC always kept a separate allotment account and provided a subsidy.
 - On 15 Feb 2021 a fixed service charge per plot was introduced by the Council and it agreed to maintain a subsidy on the allotment sites. Why is the subsidy highlighted when other items are not? No service charge for any other Council activities/amenities. The Parish Council Tax should cover the allotments service charge.
 - Why was the service charge put in place? It is an additional tax. Before any discussion, please explain the service charge. It is in addition to the council tax .
 - Request for the Council to review the service charge.
- 1 member – speed cameras
 - What has happened to the offer for 50% of the cost of the FEASC? What other options do we have ?
 - Working Party to raise the money privately.

The meeting was updated with the information that Cllr Cunningham of Essex County Council will not support an Average Speed Camera as it does not meet policy criteria. Also, SERP will not support the ongoing cost, and in any event ECC finance is currently not available.
- 5 Members of the public on land adjacent to Eagle Cottage (item 23/1798)
 - The householder who has undertaken the recent works submitted a written report to the meeting outlining the history of the works.
 - The householder has maintained the area since 2007 and recently planted hedges and installed a simple wood and rail fence that does not enclose the area.

- 1 members of the public attended as an observer.

23/1776 Report by County Councillor – (Cllr Mike Steel).

The full report will be online in the agenda section of the website.

- Potholes – A new scheme for member led carriage way repairs will start in April.
- LHP – works are running a year behind due to the delays on one of the larger items.
- Land Adjacent to Eagle Cottage:
 - Various complaints received concerning blocking of PROW (public right of way) and loss of open space.
 - There is not a PROW across the land, but it is registered as open space.
 - The hedges and fence introduced may be too near the highway – the requirements are 45cm beyond the highway’s edge – Essex Highways to review.
 - Ownership discussed in 2021 via e-mail.
 - The land is not recorded on the Land Registry (digital records started 1990s).
 - However, it is designated as a Village Green, as recorded in 1984.
 - Cllr Steel has passed on the Clerk’s e-mail pointing out it is recorded as a Village Green to the owners of Eagle Cottage.
- Pylons – Norwich to Tilbury. Recent ESO report has looked at 9 options. Overland is still cheapest route (at c.£2bn). Offshore route is c.£2.4bn more. Buried cabling would add c.£1bn more to the overland route. Report is now out and available.
- Transport safety officers are to be introduced on buses.
- Recycling centre booking requirement now permanent.

23/1777 Report by Chelmsford City Councillor – (Cllr Mike Steel).

The full report will be online in the agenda section of the website.

- Land adjacent to White Cottage, Great Waltham Village went to CCC planning committee. However, it has been refused as it is in the conservation area and outside the village envelope.
- Chelmsford Local Plan update – plan includes two sites in Ford End, one south of the school and one west of Back Lane – each site would be for 20 houses.

23/1778 Confirm the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 19th February 2024.

Resolution: The minutes were confirmed.

23/1779 Local Planning Authority Decisions.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Status</u>
22/00737/S73	Lyndhurst Ringtail Green Great Waltham Chelmsford Essex CM3 1LW	Application Permitted
23/01916/PIP	Land Adjacent White Cottage South Street Great Waltham Chelmsford Essex	Application Refused
24/00073/FUL	Woodman’s Cottage Main Road Howe Street Chelmsford CM3 1BA	Application Permitted

Resolution: Noted.

23/1780 Planning Applications.-(All).

1. Reference: 24/00168/FUL

Address: Building Northwest of Well House Farm, Little Green Road, Great Waltham

Description of works: Alterations to existing Nissen Hut for residential, new vehicle entry, garage, and associated landscaping.

Resolution: The Parish Council has no objections.

2. Reference: 24/00270/LBC

Address: Little Garretts, Mill Road, Great Waltham, Dunmow.

Description of works: Replacement of existing extension with a new single storey side extension

Resolution: The Parish Council has no objections.

3. Reference: 24/00269/FUL

Address: Little Garretts, Mill Road, Great Waltham, Dunmow.

Description of works: Replacement of existing extension with a new single storey side extension

Resolution: The Parish Council has no objections.

23/1781 Finance Report.-(Clerk).

Current Account: £8,483.50

Reserve Account: £34,138.48

- £10,000 Ford End Speed Cameras.
- £750 Allotment deposits.
- £23,000 Capital Works.
- £388.48 Cil.

Total £42,621.98

Resolution: The report was noted.

23/1782 End Of Year Forecast.

	Budget	Spent	Balance
Staff Costs	£26,200	£31,622	-£5,422
Administration	£9,349	£8,978	£371
Open Spaces	£42,711	£12,036	£30,675
Allotments	£1,400	£1,286	£114
Grants	£2,000	£1,391	£609

The budget overspend was discussed. The staff costs were set for the budget in October 2022. The budget started in April 2023 and runs to March 2024. The Clerk's hours were increased from 21 to 25 hours per week due to the increasing workload after the budget had been set. After the budget has been set NALC announced the increase for the spinal points which was unexpectedly high and backdated to April.

23/1783 Confirmation of payments-(Clerk):

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/23

No	Payment Reference	Gross	To pay	Heading	Invoice	Invoice	Details
1230		£424.56	£424.56	210	17/03/24	37631	Edge IT Systems Ltd - additional tablet for playground inspections
1231		£53.70	£53.70	265	17/03/24	001	Cleaning Services - Monthly cleaning of the pavilion
1232		£152.24	£152.24	265	17/03/24		Cllr Jim Jenkins - hand drier for the pavilion
1233		£375.00	£375.00	240	17/03/24	1869	Chatham Hall Estate - half yearly payment for the allotments
1234		£20.00	£20.00	255	17/03/24		Target Farms - annual rent of Howe street play area
1235		£790.35	£790.35	103	17/03/24		HMRC (PAYE/NI) - paye
1238		£49.05	£49.05	120	17/03/24		Jason Buckley - Handyman - expenses
1239		£131.87	£131.87		17/03/24		Will Adshedd-Grant - expenses
	1	£9.00					mileage
	2	£23.00					telephones
	3	£9.32					it fasthost
	4	£60.00					Land Searches
	5	£27.80					Course - Training
	6	£2.75					postage
1240			£544.24		19/03/24		Essex Pension Fund - Confidential
	2	£37.72	£110				Employee Contribution AVC
	3	£415.89	£115				Employer contribution
Sub Total		£2,450.38	£2,450.38				
		£1,486.30	£1,486.30				Confidential
Total		£3,936.68	£3,936.68				

Resolution: **Payments were approved.**

23/1784 Monthly Bank Reconciliation.

Resolution: **The bank reconciliation was approved with zero difference.**

23/1785 Discuss the bids received for the 2024-2027 grounds maintenance contract. The three bids were reviewed and Supplier 3 (the lowest cost option) was selected.

Resolution: **Clerk to contact the unsuccessful companies to update them.**

Resolution: **Clerk to inform JCM that they have been successful in the tender.**

23/1786 Discuss the 'Love Your Parish' offer from Chelmsford City Council. Annual scheme for some small clean up items around the parish.

Resolution: **Clerk to fill in the paperwork to arrange for the footpaths in Ford End to be cleaned.**

23/1787 To agree that the Council considers that for the 2022/23 contract period it did deliver the services at the allotment sites which were taken into account when assessing and setting the service charge element in the hiring fee structure.

The service charge was introduced as part of the overall hiring fee alongside the land rent charge element to take account of the additional costs associated with the allotments and to partly mitigate the level of the subsidisation for the amenity. In a typical year the overall allotment provision is now subsidised by c.50%.

Resolution: **The Parish Council agreed the motion.**

23/1788 To agree that the Council agrees it should continue to charge hiring fees for plots at its allotment sites, and that the existing two-element (rent and service charge) allotment hiring fee structure should be retained while there are chargeable rent restrictions in place under the leasing agreement with its landlord.

An amendment to the motion was proposed: that the service charge should be dropped as no other Council amenities attract such a charge. Other members cited the exclusive access to and use of their plots enjoyed by allotment holders as being the justification for the service charge.

The amendment was voted on and rejected. The original motion was then voted on.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed the motion.

23/1789 To agree that the Council considers its current methodology used when assessing and setting the service charge element in the hiring fee structure to be fair and reasonable.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed the motion.

23/1790 To agree that the Council considers its allotments pricing structure to be broadly aligned with the market rate for the provision of such amenities, and as such offers good value for money for plot holders.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed the motion.

23/1791 As recommended by the Recreation Committee, to agree to increase the rent element of the allotments hiring fee to £4.28 (from £4.00) to take effect September 2024.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed the motion.

23/1792 As recommended by the Recreation Committee, to agree to increase the service charge element of the allotments hiring fee to £8.50 (from £7.00) per plot holder to take effect September 2024.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed the motion.

23/1793 To consider what actions the Council can take in relation to providing and implementing (or encouraging the provision and implementation by others of) crime deterrent measures in the parish (see briefing paper circulated with the agenda).

Resolution: The Parish Council will support parishioner initiatives where we can and encourage the Police to present at its meetings.

23/1794 To agree the content of an acknowledgement and response letter to the communication of 21/2/2024 (circulated with the agenda) from the ECC Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport to the Council in relation to the Ford End Average Speed Camera Scheme.

The Chair indicated the proposed content for a response letter which would be posted on the parish website.

Resolution: The Council agreed the proposed content of the response letter.

23/1795 To consider the Council's next steps in relation to further traffic calming measures on the B1008 at Ford End (in accordance with the commitments made in the resolution made under agenda item 23/1737 at its meeting on 15/1/2024; that is "This Parish Council reconfirms its view that the weight, volume and speed of vehicles using the B1008 through Ford End village continues to present a risk to pedestrians and other road users and will continue to lobby Essex County Council Highways for road safety improvements").

Resolution: The Council will continue to monitor the situation and raise concerns, and press for consultative involvement in any future policy considerations.

23/1796 To agree to implement the draft Emergency Situations policy document (circulated with the agenda).

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed to implement the draft policy.

23/1797 To agree the next spine point increase to the Clerk's salary following a recommended satisfactory annual appraisal.

The Chair reported feedback from three members received for the Clerk's performance review meeting. The appraisal process for 2023/24 has been completed and the Clerk's objectives will be agreed for 2024-2025. A satisfactory performance recommendation for 2023/24 was made.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed the motion.

23/1798 To determine what action GWPC needs to take in response to the claim on land adjacent to Eagle Cottage.

The Clerk confirmed that the area is a Village Green and is recorded on the Village Green and Commons Register held by Essex County Council. It was registered in 1984 after consideration by the Commons Commissioners. The owners of Eagle Cottage have been informed in writing of the position.

Resolution: The owners of Eagle Cottage are invited to respond to the Council's letter in the next 14 days so that the Council can consider its next steps.

Resolution: Clerk to register the land with Land Registry as being owned by the Parish Council.

23/1799 To update PC on use of volunteers to side out footways, including Main Road/Pendon Hill Great Waltham/Howe Street and to discuss and agree a way forward – Cllr Bradley.

Resolution: Defer to the next meeting.

23/1800 Discuss the reasons for the large increase in the GWPC part of the council tax bill and what can be done to ameliorate issues that arise from this.

The Council's annual report (which will be published in Parish News) will offer information on the key drivers for the increase. In the meantime, details are available in the minutes (and associated documents) of Council meetings posted on the parish website.

23/1801 Consider the SID data accuracy and the posting of the data on the Parish Council website.

It has emerged that the data shown on the Speed Indicator Device (SID) reports posted on the parish website can be misinterpreted. In particular, the traffic count may be understated by the technology, while the report structure includes double-counting of recorded vehicles. Therefore, the data as presented may cause confusion and offer a false picture to anyone using them.

Resolution: The Parish Council agreed to stop publishing the SID data on the parish website.

23/1802 Discuss an in-principle expenditure of up to £1000 on replacing the wooden bridge on the tower units at Great Waltham Recreation Ground.

The Clerk produced a report showing available options to replace the bridge which is starting to rot.

Resolution: The Parish Council approved expenditure up to £1,000 for this purpose.

23/1803 Discuss and approve any items for publication.-(All).

- Annual report
- Precis of this meeting

Next Meeting:

2024	
Monday 8th April	Great Waltham Parish Council Recreation Committee @ 7.30pm
Monday 15th April	Great Waltham Parish Council Highways & Transport Committee @ 7.30pm
Monday 22nd April	Great Waltham Parish Council Monthly Meeting at 7.30pm

Monday 29th April	Great Waltham Parish Council Finance and General Purposes Committee @ 7.30pm
Tuesday 7th May	Annual Assembly of the Parish, Gt Waltham Village Hall @ 8.00pm
Monday 20th May	Great Waltham Parish Council AGM and Monthly Meeting @ 7.30pm
Tuesday 16th June	Great Waltham Parish Council Monthly Meeting at 7.30pm at FE Village Hall

Meeting Closed 21.59
Will Adshead-Grant
Clerk to the Council.