

# Great Waltham Parish Council

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Minutes of the Highways and Transport Committee of Great Waltham Parish Council held in the Pavilion, South Street, Great Waltham on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7.00pm .

1. Chair's Welcome:

Chair: Gilbert.

Councillors: Bradley, Jenkins and Martin.

2. Apologies for Absence.

There were no apologies received.

3. Declarations of interests (existence and nature) with regard to items on the agenda and requests for dispensation.

There were no declarations.

4. Public Participation session - items do not need to on the agenda.

Three members of the public attended.

One member of the public raised issues regarding the continued flooding issues at Church Lane, Ford End whereby an Essex Highways installed drain across several properties remains blocked causing flooding to the resident's property:

- Essex Highways have been contacted several times and are unwilling to engage again.
- The water drains off the highways underground drainage system and into the resident's garden and then eventually into the house.
- In July 2021 a large body of water gathered on the Church Lane when it rained.
- An investigation by Essex Highways required them to dig holes in the resident's garden and they cut the drainage pipe to enable the blockage to be investigated, but repairs were inadequate so that not only was the blockage not discovered the pipe under the resident's garden began to leak.
- Therefore, while the flooding of Church Lane has been resolved, the drainage system is now emptying into the resident's garden.
- The pipe is a communal road drain and goes out through an outlet to the Chelmer. It is a public pipe running through private land. A garage has been built over the pipe on part of the neighbouring land and may have caused an issue with the pipe.
- While it was emphasised that the Council has no powers over highways matters, the chair requested that the resident supply full updated details of the issue to assess whether it could make any further representations to help resolve the matter.

2 members of the public as observers.

5. Update from representatives of the Speed Watch groups in Ford End and Great Waltham.

• Ford End.

- Three new recruits have gone through the mandatory training however their availability has been patchy.
- There are six members of the core team. However, several of the team are still working full or part time which makes sessions difficult to arrange.
- The SID movement has not been communicated to Speed Watch to help avoid a duplication of efforts. Suggested that a battery check is required on the units as the SID unit appears to stop working after 48 hours.
- It was indicated that some number plates recorded by Speed Watch are not registered on the DVLA site. However, on subsequent checks with Essex Police the details have been located. Suggested the team may wish to consider making verbal record of the survey to avoid input errors.
- The accident count high on the B1008 is still. 2 multi vehicle accidents this calendar year already.
- 15 speeding vehicles last week (over 36mph) – maximum speed recorded 45mph.

- Great Waltham.
  - No surveys undertaken this year as the trained membership is low and a survey team needs a minimum of three volunteers. Currently only four active members. General traffic increase noted on South Street through to Margaret Woods Road as part of a 'rat run' to Chelmsford.

6. To note the contents of the ECC response document (circulated with the agenda) received following the submission of questions to Essex Highways by the Committee as part of its request for a meeting with their liaison officers.

- At the last Committee meeting it was agreed to look to discuss a number of issues directly with Essex Highways to better understand the implementation of policy and an invitation to a meeting was offered. ECC Cllr Steel responded with several items of information including some feedback from Essex Highways.
- The Committee noted its disappointment with the tone and nature of the response and that the request for a meeting to discuss the issues raised was not supported.
- The Committee believes Essex Highways has lost a valuable opportunity to raise its profile and discuss important issues with a stakeholder.

7. To consider the merits of any further activities or requests in light of the information supplied in the ECC response document.

- The Committee considers a restricted direct access to policy implementers creates a barrier to better understanding both the challenges ECC face and the opportunities for stakeholders such as parish councils to self-fund schemes.
- It was noted that freedom of information requests could be raised to obtain more information on the number and nature of road defects in the parish, but concerns were expressed on how in the current environment the data could be meaningfully used.
- The Committee agrees that PR1 routes should be supported by repairs to the highest standard, although it seems questionable whether this is currently the case in the parish.
- A 20's Plenty webinar on Wednesday (26/2) to showcase the results of the implementation of 20 mph limits in Wales is available to all to book. It is expected presenters will provide details beneath the headline 30% reduction of fatal/injury incidents in Wales since the limit was introduced.
- It was noted the next scheduled LHP meeting is on 12<sup>th</sup> March, there having been no meeting for 6 months due to reorganisation.
- It was noted the current Ringway Jacobs contract for Essex Highways is due to expire in 2027.
- The absence of any consultation with parish councils on the new place and movement methodology in the proposed revised ECC Functional Route Hierarchy Review was noted. It was proposed that the Committee write to the parish's city councillors to understand the reasons for the lack of engagement and to request a copy of all available information.

**Resolution: Clerk to write to our three city councillors for a copy of the policy document released to them by Essex Highways and to seek guidance on why parish councils were not consulted on the proposals for their areas as part of the Hierarchy Review process.**

8. To receive updates on all open Action Tracker items (based on the Tracker document circulated with the agenda).

The tracker items were reviewed, and several were closed or updated. Some of the items on the tracker will be pulled forward to the next meeting and raised as agenda items so that progress can be made.

9. To note the progress on highways and transport matters being considered and tracked by the full Council.

Parish pathways partnership will be discussed at the Council's March monthly meeting.

**Members: – Cllr Gilbert, Cllr Martin, Cllr McDevitt, Cllr Jenkins, Cllr Bradley and a Vacancy.**

Meeting close: 20.35  
Will Adshead-Grant  
Clerk to the Council.