

GWPC – Proposed Strategic Approach for Management of Defibrillators in the Parish

1. This proposed strategic approach is based on discussions and work carried out by the defibrillator working group (initiated by resolution at the monthly meeting on 16/1/2023). Its work has been informed by the resolutions at the Council's monthly meetings in:
 - October 2022 where, in response to the agenda item 'Review the provision of defibrillators within the Parish and consider whether the Parish Council should assume a role in their administration and availability', the Council resolved: 'In principle agreement that a budget for replacement defibrillators and heated cases is included for 2023/2024, including for ongoing maintenance depending on the age of the units'; and
 - December 2022 where, under the agenda item 'Discuss the proposal for the Parish Council to assume responsibility for the provision of defibrillators in the Great Waltham Parish', it was resolved that (a) '[t]he Parish Council will assume responsibility for the provision and maintenance of units in Great Waltham Parish and will provide an additional unit for Broads Green' and (b) '[t]he Council approves the engagement with the Community Heartbeat Trust for the maintenance and provision of defibrillators units for the Parish from April 2023 in line with its budget provisions'.
2. Based on these decisions, this document details a longer-term strategic approach and recommends short- and medium-term actions based on an agreement to the overall objectives.
3. It is recommended that a primary goal is to establish a roadmap where ultimately the Council assumes full responsibility for all publicly available defibrillators within the parish of Great Waltham, limited to one in each village or hamlet. This is likely to happen over a number of years, determined by the timing of the lapsing of current arrangements, the willingness of current 'owners' to defer responsibility to the Council before existing contracts expire, and the Council's own budgetary constraints.
4. None of the five existing publicly available defibrillators are arranged on exactly the same basis and therefore an incremental approach in terms of full adoption is recommended. It is recommended that within the agreed budget immediate action should be taken for the Council to install and fully administer two units, not necessarily at the same time but in accordance with a timetable determined by the duration of existing agreements and other factors which may precipitate opportunities to effect new arrangements.
5. The working group recommends that all new defibrillators (and associated services) are procured from a single supplier. To that end, based on an assessment document comparing two market leading providers, the working group has asked the Council to resolve that it sources all new equipment from Community Heartbeat Trust.
6. The five existing defibrillators are located in:
 - Great Waltham (GW) at Walthambury Stores, Barrack Lane, Great Waltham.
 - Ford End (FE) at Ford End Village Hall, Main Road, Ford End.
 - Howe Street (HS) at Fitzandrews Farm, Main Road, Howe Street.
 - Littley Green (LG) at The Compasses, Littley Green Road, Littley Green.
 - North End (NE) at North End Telephone Box, Bennetts Lane, North End.

7. The new location (to ensure full coverage in each substantive settlement in the parish) is Broads Green (BG).
8. The working group proposes that the following strategic approach (with associated recommendations) is taken at the various locations:
 - 8.1. LG and NE. Both existing 'owners' have welcomed GWPC's commitment of future support. The current arrangement at NE expires in 2026. The LG unit does not have a support arrangement in place and the owner is looking for GWPC to support ongoing maintenance. It is recommended that GWPC works with the current 'owners' to facilitate the most mutually convenient ways of GWPC assuming full responsibility.
 - 8.2. GW. The unit here was replaced in 2020 and the arrangement with the current 'owner' therefore runs until 2026. The recommendation is to monitor the situation and decide on any action or involvement before 2026 only after discussion with the current owner.
 - 8.3. HS. The existing unit was installed in 2016 and ideally should be replaced in 2023; however, depending on the battery condition, deferring its replacement until 2024 may be possible. It was part funded by the owner of the farm upon whose land the unit is located. The owner of the farm is content to work with GWPC to continue a similar type of arrangement from 2024. It is recommended that when the existing arrangement expires the Council looks to step in and continues to ensure the provision of a defibrillator on a similar basis at the same location but under a new contract.
 - 8.4. FE. The existing unit is due for replacement in 2023. It is recommended that the Council formally contacts Ford End Village Hall to confirm that it will assume responsibility for the provision of a new defibrillator in Ford End, preferably at the same location. Subject to agreement it is proposed that the Council begins to immediately effect a smooth transfer from the current arrangements (including confirming to the current 'owner' its intentions).
 - 8.5. BG. The recommendation is to buy and install a new defibrillator. The best likely locations seem to be either at The Walnut Tree or in the old telephone box (owned by the Council). The owners of The Walnut Tree have given an initial indication of a willingness to host a unit. It is recommended that working party continues to evaluate the optimal site in the area (based on ease of use, access to power supply etc.) with a view to making a recommendation to the Council to initiate the process of installing a unit as soon as possible (timing being subject to any budgetary constraints and/or the need to bring forward involvement in any of the arrangements for existing units).
9. The Council should recognise it will be making a long-term investment and agreement of the strategy involves making an ongoing financial commitment over a number of years. It will therefore need to include a sum for the provision of defibrillators in its future budgets, although it is recommended that all other sources of funding (e.g. grants) are always investigated.