

Waltham Parish Council

EST. 1894

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd March 2020 at Waltham Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors: John Barry (Chair), Jane Robinson, and Sue Browne
City Councillor: Robert Thomas
Parish Clerk: Tony McCord.

There was one member of the public present.

Meeting commenced at: 19.30. The Chairman gave a warm welcome to attendees.

19/20.0113. To receive and approve apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr's Carolyn Lawrence and Ben Grillet. Members **Resolved** to accept the apologies.

19/20.0114. To receive declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary interests or Other significant Interest:

There were no new declarations relating to agenda items.

19/20.0115. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2020:

It was **Resolved** that the minutes were a correct record and were approved and signed.

19/20.0116. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered by the agenda:

There were no matters arising.

19/20.0117. Public Session: To receive questions and comments from the public:

A member of the public raised the issue of continuing work being carried out at Dene Meadow, Duckpit Lane, and the presence of a mobile home on site which appeared to be occupied overnight. Concern was expressed about the unsightly development in an AONB. It was **Resolved** to check the current position on planning permission and the Clerk was requested to contact the City Council **Action: Clerk.**

19/20.0118. To receive reports from County and City Councillors:

City Cllr Robert Thomas presented his report:

The city council has received ~£1m as part of a cross district project to help with homelessness. The challenge is a big one and we do far more than some other councils and I believe our approach to date has been the right one even if it means we are approached by people coming from farther afield who do not have a local connection. Some local authorities buy the homeless person a cup of coffee and send them on their way with a one way ticket to the next town (sad but true!).

Further to that CCC agreed to end the East Kent Housing arrangements and will be managing housing in-house once the break up process is complete. This will ensure better oversight of the capital programme expenditure which wasn't been spent as proactively as it should have been to prevent other issues. Additionally the compliance issues around gas safety, lifts, legionella etc will be rigorously checked and issues resolved.

In the last term of council we bought former student accommodation in Parham Road and we've been converting it to use it for social housing. The latest update is that the final handovers for the first phase of Parham have been completed. This phase comprises 18 houses and six flats. The second phase of conversion work, which will provide 37 homes, has begun. These are due for completion by the end of this year.

The future of park and ride provision is on hold while we wait for a new design for the slip road is approved and other environmental issues are looked at

We are currently consulting on some improvements to St George's Street (the high street) and the future of the market too.

In terms of planning you may recall we are embarking on the next update of the Local Plan and you had your meeting with the CCC Planning Policy Manager, Karen Britton, well now the wide community are asked to get involved with their suggestions for what areas should be developed in the call for sites <https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/callforsites>

Updates on the existing major sites can be seen at https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/info/20014/planning_and_building/306/major_developments

19/20.0119. Financial Matters:

i) **To note the Parish Councils financial position:** A set of year to date financial reports had been distributed to Members prior to the meeting. In summary:

- Starting Balance at 01:04:2019 = £9,604.00
- Income to Date: £10 695.08
- Expenditure to date (including £235.72 VAT): £11,269.61
- In-year Balance - £1,343.00
- Balance in Bank Accounts: £10,841.94
- In year overspend against budget of £1,343.00 due to VAT, staff training costs and Defibrillator purchase. VAT will be reclaimed; CCC grant award towards defibrillator costs pending; remainder supported by contingency fund.

It was unanimously **Resolved** to approve the report.

Action: Clerk/RFO

ii) **To authorise payments:**

The Clerk/RFO presented a payments schedule for Member consideration:

Date	Payment Summary	Cheque No:	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount
03/03/2020	Clerks Salary, allowances, IONOS hosting fee	000644	£218.40	£0.20	£218.60
03/03/2020	Hall Hire Fees – additional sessions	000645	£20.00	0	£20.00
03/03/2020	Chairman's expenses	000527	£41.67	£8.33	£50.00
		Total	£280.07	£8.53	£288.60

It was **Resolved** to approve the schedule and the payments were authorised in accordance with Councils Financial Instructions.

Action: Clerk/RFO

19/20.0120. Planning Matters:

Members considered planning applications CA/20.00225 and CA/20.0322, both relating to variation of conditions to a previous application for Whiteacre Barn, CT4 5SR. It was **Resolved** not to object to the variations and to advise the Planning Department to this effect.

Discussion then ensued about the possibility of delegating responsibility to a planning sub-committee to cover summer / winter breaks. It was **Resolved** to explore this further. **Action: Clerk**

19/20.0121. Defibrillator Project:

Members were advised that the heated cabinet has arrived. Clerk volunteered to install at an agreed position in telephone kiosk. May need to dismantle back panel to gain access to electrical supply.

SECAMB will be informed once installation is completed. Need for village contact in case of emergencies – for further discussion. Cabinet and Defibrillator will be recorded in Asset Register and Insurers advised of change. There will be ongoing costs for Battery renewal after use or every 5 years, plus replacement of single use electrode pads. Suggest funding source = contingency fund. It was **Resolved** to proceed with electrical connection once installed, cost circa £150. **Action: Clerk**

19/20.0122 Canterbury City Council Local Plan Review.

The Chairman gave an overview of recent discussions with the City Council with reference to the 'Call for sites' for housing development. It was felt that the impact on the Parish would be fairly minimal. Comment was made on the anomalous situation where planning applications for small 'infill' developments were rejected while the City Council was under pressure to increase housing stock. It was **Resolved** that a copy of the 'call for sites' document be sent to a land-owner near Waltham Court who had expressed an interest; Copy on the News section on the parish Council website; plus a copy to the Village Magazine and Facebook. **Action: Clerk**

19/20.0123. Parish Council Website.

The Clerk reported that IONOS domain registration had been completed. Cost £1 per month for first year charged to Clerk & reclaimed under allowances. Fee £5 per month thereafter so need to explore payment by Standing Order.

New website construction commences 27th March including dedicated emails for Members & clerk. WSRA and Waltham Church Council and Waltham Village Hall Management Committee signed up as partner organisations.

Members **Resolved** to accept the structure and content of Home section and Parish Council section of new site. **Action: Clerk**

19/20.0124. Highways and the Environment.

Members present at the recent meeting with KCC Highways gave a briefing. In summary:

- Imposing lower speed limits on rural roads considered impractical to police and costly to implement.
- Extension of existing 30mph zone would be cost prohibitive.
- Installation of mirrors on tight bends not considered to be appropriate.
- The installation of blue signs restricting lorry access can be explored, possibly in tandem with a grant request.
- Existing Development Plan should be amended to remove maintenance aspects then prioritise items 1, 3, 4, and 5.
- The potential for 'siding out' of verges should be explored with a request logged on to the KCC Faults system.

Members **Resolved** to review the current Development Plan then follow up with KCC Officers.

Action: Clerk

19/20.0125. Concurrent Functions Funding.

The Clerk briefed Members on a recent Stakeholder Event between City and Parish Councils. Strong concern was expressed about the possibility of losing CFF and the possible effect of either degradation of the Waltham Park recreational facility or a significant increase in the precept charge for this rural area. The issue of double taxation was raised as an unfair burden on parishes in comparison to facilities offered in urban areas that are paid for by all via the Council Tax.

The next stage of consultation will be at the Rural Forum on 23rd March. Members **Resolved** that the Clerk should continue to represent WPC at the forum and provide feedback at the April Council meeting. **Action: Clerk**

19/20.0126. Parish Council Policy Reviews.

The Parish Council is working towards gaining recognition in the National Council Awards Scheme which includes the development of a range of policies to support effective governance.

- **Grant Awarding Policy:** Increasing budgetary pressures require the Council to fully justify expenditure including that on Grants. The revised policy reinforces the need for Partner Organisations to give explicit information on the need for grants including details of previous expenditure. Members **Resolved** to approve the revised policy which will be published on the parish council website. **Action: Clerk**

19/20/0127. Any Other Business for information only.

The Clerk advised Members of a communication from a resident in Anvil Green expressing concern about a residential caravan sited on agricultural land for some three years and previously reported to the City Council Planning Department. The Clerk will investigate the background and report back to the next meeting.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Date and time of next meeting: Tuesday 7th April commencing at 7.30 pm in the village hall.

Chairman's Signature:

7th April 2020