

Waltham Parish Council

EST. 1894

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Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council held on the 7th of November 2023 at Waltham Village Hall

In line with the Transparency Code all public documents relating to the meeting are published in an agenda pack on the parish council website. Please note that the minutes remain in Draft form until approved at the next meeting.

Present: Parish Councillors John Barry (Chair), Jane Robinson (Vice Chair) Ben Grillet, John Hockley, and Yolande Andon.
Parish clerk Tony McCord in attendance.

There were no members of the public present.

The meeting commenced at 7.35pm with a welcome and introductions by the Chairman.

23/24.060 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

23/24.061 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests

There were no declarations pertaining to items on the agenda.

23/24.062 Approval of Minutes

The Chairman requested comments on pages one to three of the minutes. On page three (accuracy) it was pointed out that the 5th of November dates should be the 7th. It was **Resolved** to approve and the Chairman signed the document as a correct record.

It was requested that the recently coopted councillor should be named as Cllr Yolande Andon.

Action: Clerk

23/24.063 Public Session

There were no members of the public present.

23/24.064 Chairman's Report

- a) **Update on the new Parish Website.** It was noted that the transition arrangements were progressing well. Some difficulties remain in registering Members with CPanel webmail. Efforts continue. **Action: Clerk**
- b) The Chairman reported that initial enquiries had been made regarding the informal footpath that used to run behind the playing field towards the church. The farmer who grazes this land is disinclined to see the path reinstated. The chair noted that WPC should remain neutral in this matter which is one concerning private property. Moreover, the Council has no statutory powers or duty to intervene. Consequently, it was resolved that the matter could not progress further at this stage. However, it was agreed that should clarification be obtained as to the

existence of any custom and practice considerations or '20-year rule' this could be discussed at a later meeting.

Action: Cllr Andon

- c) **Notice Boards.** It was reported that cracks were appearing in two of the Perspex glazing panels. As the notice boards were still under warranty it was **resolved** to obtain photographic evidence and request replacements from Notice Boards Online.

Action: Cllr Grillet & Clerk

23/24.065 Reports from County and City Councillors

No reports had been received.

23/24.066 Financial Matters

- a) **Finance Report and Payments schedule** Members were presented with a report for the period 1st of April to 31st of October 2023.

Balance brought forward 01:04:2023.	£9,346.94
Total receipts (including B/F)	£19,801.76
Total payments	£9,049.81
Cashbook Balance	£10,081.95
Unity Trust balance	£10,081.95

- a) **Payment Schedule 1st to 31st of October.** Members were advised that invoices no: 365500; and 06; had not been processed due to internet banking problems and required resubmission. Two further invoices were outstanding :

Transaction Number	Invoice Date	Invoice Number	Payee	Payment Summary	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount
23/24.17	18:08:2023	365500	CCC	Election Recharge	£56.70	-	£56.70
23/24.23	26:09:2023	06	A.S.McCord	Salary & Expenses	£267.10	-	£267.10
23/24.24	02:10:2023	22-0003	Parish Online	Website Service	£280.00	£56.00	£336.00
23/24.25	01:11:2023	07	A.S.McCord	Salary & Expences	£267.10	-	£267.10
Total					£870.90	£56.00	£926.90

The RFO confirmed that In order to avoid delays, invoice numbers 365500 and 22-0003 had been paid via his personal bank account and would be reimbursed once the internet banking issue had been resolved.

After noting the reports Members **resolved** to approve payments, countersigned by the Chairman.

Action: Clerk/RFO

23/24.067 Budget Setting Process 2024/25

Members discussed in detail the second draft of a budget for the next financial year which included indicative receipts and payment trends over the previous three years. One

Member questioned the accuracy of the trends and the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) will revisit the historical figures.

The RFO had recommended that in order to take account of inflation and meet aspirations in Sustainable Transport, identified as a priority by parishioners in the Parish Plan, there would need to be an increase in the Precept demand from £7,161 to £8,526. This would be dependent on a successful Capital Grant award of £1,650 from the City Council.

Having considered the detail Members accepted the RFO recommendations and **resolved** to make a final decision at the December meeting once the Grant position was known.

Action: Clerk/RFO

23/24.068 Consultation with Parishioners

It was noted that the proposed precept increase of £1,365 would represent an *average* increase per household of some £7.00 depending on council tax banding. Respondents to the Parish Plan questionnaire had been supportive of a precept increase to aid developments. Members felt that it was important to seek views again now that more detail is available. It was **resolved** that the Clerk/RFO should construct a brief overview of the issues for publication on the website, copy to Facebook and PAWNews, and report any reaction to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk/RFO

23/24.069 Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) priorities for 2024/25

A substantive HIP had been included in the Agenda Pack. The report summarised the three Parish Plan priorities identified by parishioners in the development of Sustainable Transport:

- Options for speed reduction.
- Reduction of hazards for horse riders and children.
- Road treatment during adverse weather.

In the meantime, it was **Resolved** to press ahead with discussions with KCC on the provision of a gate sign; on a revised Adverse Weather Policy; and a repeat of the road traffic survey conducted in 2021.

It was suggested that road signage and road markings at the Richdore Road/ Pennypot/ Sole Street crossroads needed attention and should be added to the HIP.

A virtual meeting has been arranged with KCC at 10.00am on the 23rd of November, and WPC would be represented by Cllr Barry and Cllr Andon with the Clerk in attendance.

Action: Clerk

23/24.070 Planning Applications

Requests for comment had been received via the City Council for the installation of a package treatment plant at 3 locations:

- a) CA-23-01892 – 2 Yorkletts Cottages CT4 5PZ.
- b) CA-23-01893 – Sheepcourt Farm, Sheepcourt Lane CT4 5PY.
- c) CA-23-01894 – White Cottage, Sheepcourt Lane CT4 5PY.

Having considered the details Members unanimously **resolved** to support all three applications.

Action: Clerk

23/24.071 Dog Control Public Space Protection Order

Members noted that the Clerk had responded on behalf of WPC to an online consultation request from the City Council expressing support for the proposal and suggesting that the Order should be extended to rural public spaces not in CCC's direct control.

It was **resolved** that as Waltham Parish Council had its own Statutory Powers under sections 55 and 59 of the Clean Neighbourhood and Environmental Act (2005) it could consider adopting the CCC model once agreed. **Action: Clerk**

23/24.072 Member of Parliament Newsletter

A request had been made for WPC to consider publishing newsletters from the local MP on the parish website. Members noted that some existing KCC and Ward councillors used their party emblems and resolved that this would be acceptable providing that the content did not contain electioneering material. **Action: Clerk**

Date of Next Meeting: Business having been concluded the Chairman thanked attendees for their contributions and closed the meeting at 9.30 pm. The next Ordinary Meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday the 5th of December** commencing at 7.30pm in Waltham Village Hall.

Cllr Andon gave her apologies in advance due to work commitments.

Chairman's Signature:

5th of December 2023