

# Waltham Parish Council

EST. 1894

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## Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council held on the 2nd of April 2024 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, and John Hockley.

**In attendance:** Ward Councillor Mike Bland and Locum Clerk Tracey Block

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm with a welcome by the Chairman. **It was unanimously resolved that members of the public should be excluded from the meeting for Item 11 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.**

### 24/25.001 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence had been received from parish clerk Tony McCord. Belated apologies were received from Cllr Yolande Barnes due to illness.

### 24/25.002 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests:

There were no declarations of DPI or OSI's.

### 24/25.003 Approval of Minutes:

The Chairman invited comments on pages one to three of the minutes. It was **Resolved** to approve the minutes and the Chairman signed the document as a correct record. **Action: Clerk**

### 24/25.004 Public Session:

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

### 24/25.005 Chairman's Report:

- a) **Progress on filling the councillor vacancy.** A notice of co-option to the councillor vacancy has been displayed on the Parish Council noticeboard. A copy will be posted on the website, on Facebook, and to the editor of PAWNews for publication. **Action: Clerk**
- b) **Notice Boards** Digital photographs of the three cracked glazing panels had been sent to the supplier with a request for replacement under warranty. If successful WPC will need to arrange installation via a contractor or volunteer. **Action: Clerk**
- c) **Annual Parish Meeting** . To be held on 16<sup>th</sup> April at 6.30pm, The agenda was confirmed, refreshments will be provided at the meeting. Invitations to be circulated. Cllr John Hockley will take notes of the meeting.

**Action: Councillors and Clerk**

### 24/25.006 Reports from County and Ward Councillors:

**City Cllr Mike Bland** explained that the consultation will continue after the Local Plan. The Local Plan is under review and it was agreed that the coalition would look into the original consultation

responses and have considered these. A Local Plan Review Group was set up and this group worked well together. We are pleased with the all-party agreement of this review.

This Ward does not have much that will affect it as it respects the Natural Landscape (previously AONB). There are economic developments on existing sites. This Ward is not expected to respond on housing developments, this impacts other areas. We encourage you to respond to other strategies, i.e. introduction of a bus first strategy as it should provide improved bus services to the villages. The main routes will be strengthened, including Canterbury to Ashford services which will include Sunday services.

The sustainable transport strategy needs responses and we would encourage people to respond. The rural perspective requires representation as their needs are often not heard. Often, after-school clubs are not adequately served and Hospital visits are not met by bus services for more elderly people. The needs of the rural area are diverse and we cannot negate cars being used.

There is a strategy on Open Spaces talking about uses of open spaces in the district, see if it meets any needs of Waltham.

There are some additional elements of design standards that might be of interest. The consultation is still open for another 10 weeks. All documents will be available on the City Council website, only one submission can be made per person.

There is a boundary change consultation for the Boundary Commission, this is on their website. This consultation shows some boundary changes, this Ward is affected. Currently the Ward draws in Chartham and the rural areas plus some homes in Nackington and also includes Harbledown, Upper Harbledown and the London Road estate. The latter 3 will be lost and Thannington will be included. The number of City Councillors will increase to 3. The consultation closes relatively soon, please consider responding.

The Clerk has circulated both of the documents noted.

**Action: Members**

#### **24/25.007 Finance Report 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2024:**

A year-to-date interim finance report had been circulated with the agenda pack and it was noted that the carry forward balance into 2024/25 will be £7,150. Some points were raised about the structure of the report leading to concerns about accuracy.

**Action: RFO**

#### **24/25.008 Payment Schedule:**

Members noted the schedule and **resolved** to approve payments. Authorised by Cllrs John Barry and Jane Robinson.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **24/25.009 Grant Awarding Policy:**

Members discussed the draft policy which had been revised as a result of legislative changes in section 8 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023) concerning powers to fund works to property relating to affairs of the Church. It was resolved to approve the draft subject to correction of two typographical errors.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **24/25.110 Confidential Matters relating to effective governance of the Authority:**

Members discussed communications from the Clerk to a Member as it was felt that the tone of an email had been counterproductive. It was noted that governance issues had been partially resolved and support arrangements would be offered to deal with email issues. It was stressed that the priority was for all Councillors and the Clerk to work well together, and a Performance and Development review was regarded as a positive way forward.

**Action: Members and Clerk**

**24/25.111 Dates of Meetings:**

- a) The **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held at 6.30pm on Tuesday the **16<sup>th</sup> of April 2024**
- b) The next **Annual Meeting** of the council will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday the **7th of May 2024.**

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

**Chairman's Signature:**

**7th of May 2024**