

MINUTES

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.

Held at 8.00pm at Woodham Walter Women's Club.

Monday 14th April 2025

Present:

Cllr. John Brown (Chairman)
Cllr. James Bunn
Cllr. Emel Fowler
Cllr. James Rushton
Cllr. Joanna Symons
Cllr. John Tompkins
Cllr. Peter Warren

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)
District Cllr. Simon Morgan (in attendance 8.00-8.50pm)
County Cllr. Jane Fleming (in attendance 9.15-9.35pm)
Public: None

3381. Welcome Cllr. Brown welcomed those present to the meeting.

3382. To report, approve and record apologies for absence

Apologies were received from District Cllr. Mark Durham.

3383. Disclosure of Interests/Consideration of Dispensations

3383.1 To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs), Other Registerable Interests (ORIs), or Non-Registerable Interests (NRIs) relating to items of business on the agenda having regard the Code of Conduct for Members. (Members are reminded they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout the meeting).

Cllr. Emel Fowler	DPI	Footpath 16 as the land is owned by her spouse.
-------------------	-----	---

3383.2 To receive and consider any requests for dispensations.

Cllr. James Rushton	Dispensation Granted. No Voting.	St Michael's Church discussions as he is a Church Warden. re: defibrillator
---------------------	-------------------------------------	--

3384. Public Forum There were no members of the public present.

3385. To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 10th March 2025

RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

3386. Matters Arising - Progress report (not for resolution)

3386.1 The report compiled by the Clerk was noted. Matters for report are contained within the agenda.

3387. Planning – APPLICATIONS RECEIVED (for consideration or report)

3387.1 2500215/PDE 11 Rectory Road

Single storey rear extension which would extend beyond the rear wall of the original house by 3.59m, maximum height of 3.32m and the maximum height to the eaves of 3m.

It was noted that due to the timescale and limited opportunity for comment due to the nature of the application, the response was delegated to the Clerk. There were no objections raised but commented the flat roof does not align with the adopted Woodham Walter Village Design Statement and it is very close to the boundary and therefore may affect privacy of the neighbours.

3387.2 25/00233/HOUSE 2 Hawkins Farm Cottages

Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension with addition of sky lights. Relocation of porch to the front elevation. Alterations to fenestration.

Councillors commented that the application was a great improvement on the previous applications.

RESOLVED to support the application.

3387.3 25/00253/TCA Memorial Garden, Church Hill
T2 – Horse Chestnut – Fell
Parish Council application following Highways requirement to fell.

RESOLVED to instruct Skippers to carry out the work subject to approval of the application.
RESOLVED to replace the tree in the autumn.

3387.4 There were no further planning applications received.

3388. Planning – DECISIONS (for consideration or report)

3388.1 25/00133/WTPO Hollyoak House, Mead Pastures CONSENT GRANTED
TPO 04/78 T1 Oak - Remove dead wood from tree and reduce lower branches by 2m that are interfering with telephone lines.

3388.2 Decisions Awaited

a) 25/00085/FUL Warren Golf Club, Old London Road
Erection of 4x4m treated timber shed to receive the irrigation pumps currently located within an existing greenkeeping shed, due for demolition under permission FUL/MAL/22/00620

3388.3 Appeal Decisions Awaited

a) 23/00154/LDE Annexe at Guys Farm, Manor Road
WWPC Response: No Comment
Remains outstanding – Final comments April 2024

3389. Other Planning Matters /Other MDC Matters (for consideration or report)

3389.1 Enforcement – To consider any updates received. None received.

3390. Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr. John Tompkins

General Update and Report following distribution of questionnaires and meeting of steering group.

- The monthly meeting of the steering group had taken place and it was disappointing that there are not more volunteers.
- Stuffing of the envelopes for the surveys had been done at Walter's Café and distributed by local volunteers.
- Survey returns are coming in:

RCCE Housing Needs	44
Village Place	34 + 8 (at RCCE)
Business	2
- Interesting to see the results coming in and visual analysis reports will be produced for display at the Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 15th May and the drop in session on Saturday 17th May.
- The drop in session the previous Saturday had not been well attended but a required part of the process is offering opportunities for local residents to engage and ask questions.
- The Neighbourhood Plan is a major tool to protect the village for the future so it needs to have the backing and support of the community. The current small team is not realistic to be able to complete the project, so more volunteers are encouraged, no in depth or technical knowledge is required. There are several specific subject areas requiring attention.
- An Instagram page has been set up which will be used to promote the Neighbourhood Plan project as well as other village things such as Walters Café or just nice pictures from around the village which help to encourage engagement.
- The report will also be made up of maps, policies and information some of which will be determined by the results of the survey's – so it is very important that as broader sample of views are submitted as possible.
- The Village Design Statement also requires updating. Cllr. Tompkins requested that this be completed by another councillor and Cllr. Brown volunteered. The review will look at decisions over the last few years to determine if the document requires amendments. Consideration will also be given to the fact that applications are submitted which do not align with the VDS so maybe the VDS needs to be updated to align with local views which may have changed since the VDS was supported by the village and adopted by MDC.
- The Neighbourhood Plan will be a statutory document and must work in conjunction with the NPPF and Local Plan.
- A grant had been received for 2024/2025 of which £2525 had been spent and we need to re-pay £249.69.
RESOLVED that Cllr. Tompkins will apply for a grant for 2025/2026 given consideration to any professional reports that may be required.
- RESOLVED to send a list of areas requiring work to all councillors and to share in a village email so that local residents can see if there is anything that they feel able to assist with.

3391. To receive reports of the County and District Councillor's.

District Cllr. Morgan reported that he had been spending time dealing with the Traveller Site in Woodham Mortimer; also considerations over the local government re-organisation; he reported that there is money available for expanding the EV charging points across the district and he will send information; the council had been dealing with issues as a result of the dredging of Hythe quay as contaminants had been found in the mud; there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour in Wickham Bishops; the Statutory Annual meeting is coming up.

County Cllr. Fleming reported that she had attended the Parish & Town Council Forum; the Devolution consultation had ended and results are being considered, the draft plan had been submitted in March and the final plan will be submitted in September. There will either be 5 or 3/2 Unitary authorities and she considers it most likely to be 3 or 2 as this will result in the most cost-efficient organisations considering aspects such as adult social care because the economies of scale are so important.

Cllr. Fleming commented that she was very supportive of the work in creating Neighbourhood Plans to help protect villages such as Woodham Walter. At this stage no one knows exactly what will happen in terms of planning once devolution has happened, so that Neighbourhood Plans are now assuming much greater significance.

NHS reorganisation has resulted in operating budgets cut and boundaries re-drawn so this may also influence council boundaries.

Cllr. Fleming offered congratulations to Woodham Walter Parish Council for the successful grant bid for Love Your Bus funding.

3392. Financial Matters (for consideration or report)

3392.1 To receive the Summary of Accounts to date. This includes transactions since March meeting.

Date	▼	Unity Trust Instant Access Account	Transaction Detail	▼	Amount In	▼	Amount Out	▼	Balance	▼
12-Mar-25		Balance			-				28,909.77	
31-Mar-25		Interest Received (CR#34)			196.17		-		29,105.94	
01-Apr-25		Transferred to Current Account (RCCE)					2,500.00		26,605.94	
15-Apr-25		Transferred to Current Account			-		4,300.00		22,305.94	
					196.17		6,800.00		22,305.94	
Date	▼	Unity Trust Current Account	Transaction Detail	▼	Amount In	▼	Amount Out	▼	Balance	▼
12/03/2025		Balance							3,860.71	
13/02/2025		March Debits (#173, 178, 182, 183)					1,370.13		2,490.58	
17/03/2025		March Debits (#171, 174)					176.10		2,314.48	
18/03/2025		March Debits (#175-177)					51.03		2,263.45	
19/03/2025		March Debits (#172, 180, 185) April Debits (#186)					458.00		1,805.45	
26/03/2025		March Debits (#184) April Debits (#187)					1,353.99		451.46	
28/03/2025		Credit #CR33 (UK Power Networks Wayleave)			52.78				504.24	
31/03/2025		March Debits (#181)					6.00		498.24	
01/04/2025		Transferred from Instant Access Account			2,500.00				2,998.24	
01/04/2025		February Debits (#170 RCCE)					2,069.17		929.07	
03/04/2025		April Debits (#188)					118.80		810.27	
15/04/2025		Transferred from Instant Access Account			4,300.00				5,110.27	
15/04/2025		April Debits					4,170.31		939.96	
					6,852.78		9,773.53		939.96	

3392.2 Summary of Payments for April.

#186	Hullbridge Design & Print (NP survey's) PAID	BACS	219.00	43.80	262.80
#187	HMRC (¼ly payment) PAID	BACS	936.39	-	936.39
#1	Village Emporium (Bus Advert) PAID	BACS	99.00	19.80	118.80
#2	A&J Lighting Solutions	DD	21.00	4.20	25.20
#3	Npower	DD	69.56	3.48	73.04
#4	Mrs J Bannerman (Salary/Allowance) (ESTIMATE)	BACS	1,300.00	-	1,300.00
#5	Nest Pension (Employer £ Employee £) (ESTIMATE)	DD	195.00	-	195.00
#6	Barclaycard (Nil)	DD	-	-	-
#7	Skippers Ground Maintenance	BACS	160.00	32.00	192.00
#8	Woodham Walter Village Hall (Walter's)	BACS	30.00	-	30.00
#9	Unity Trust Bank (Charges)	DD	6.00	-	6.00
#10	EALC (Affiliation Fees inc. NALC)	BACS	208.80	-	208.80
#11	Maldon District Council (CET Jan-Mar 25)	BACS	637.05	127.41	764.46
#12	Groundwork UK (Repayment of unspent Neighbourhood Plan Grant)	BACS	249.69	-	249.69
#13	RCCE (Annual Membership Renewal)	BACS	51.50	10.30	61.80
#14	CPRE (Annual Membership Renewal)	BACS	36.00	-	36.00
#15	EALC (Village Hall Course)	BACS	100.00	20.00	120.00
#16	WM&H Parish News (Bus Advert)	BACS	80.00	-	80.00
#17	St Michael's Church (Allotment landowner agreement)	BACS	16.00	-	16.00
#18	Danbury Focus Magazine (Bus Advert) (TBC)	BACS	240.00	40.00	280.00
#19	Printing (Bus Flyer/questionnaire) (TBC)	BACS	100.00	20.00	120.00
#20	Alpha Furnishings Ltd (TBC Agenda 12.7b)	BACS	343.60	68.72	412.32
	Total		3,844.20	326.11	4,170.31

Date	Barclaycard Payments (March Statement)	Net	VAT	Gross
	None			
		-	-	-
Date	Barclaycard Payments (Estimated April Statement)	Net	VAT	Gross
25/03/2025	MDC (Parking for Parish & Town Forum)	2.67	0.53	3.20
27/03/2025	Uttlesford DC (Parking for Training at EALC)	3.50	0.70	4.20
30/03/2025	Ring Central Annual Subscription	155.88	31.18	187.06
08/04/2025	SpyraBase (Ground anchors)	40.25	8.05	48.30
18/04/2025	Walter's Café (Refreshments) Estimate	10.00	-	10.00
		212.30	40.46	252.76

All invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO. Where estimated, the Clerk will await final invoices/payslips. The clerk will seek a suitable software for reporting payroll to HMRC. The BACS payments will be drawn up by the Parish Clerk and require authorisation by councillor signatory by Payment Date of 18th April 2025 or as soon as possible.

RESOLVED to accept and authorise the summary of payments.

3392.3 Review of Bank Statements, Credit Card Statements and Account sheets for March.

Cllr. Bunn confirmed that he had reviewed the documents and found them to be reconciled correctly.

3392.4 Projector – to consider purchasing a projector

RESOLVED that due to limited usage councillors do not support the expenditure and will continue to seek options for hiring equipment when needed.

3392.5 End of Financial Year to 31st March 2025. It was noted that work had begun to complete year end tasks and Annual Governance & Accountability Return.

3392.6 Defib Funding – to consider request from St Michael's treasurer that the Parish Council holds the reserve for Defibrillator supplies.

RESOLVED to await further information as the details of the request were unclear.

3392.7a Community funding – Following on from the training attended by the Clerk it was found that paying grants to local organisations could be done in a more advantageous way for the community organisation. As the Parish Council is able to purchase goods or services to gift to the organisation, but the PC can reclaim the VAT. It was also advised that the Parish Council should not make grants without receiving an application as automatic annual grants may not necessarily be required by organisations. It is better to have a specific reason for paying out public money.

RESOLVED that in future organisations will be asked to complete an application. The details are already available on our website and organisations will be informed of the process.

3392.7b Village Hall - to consider purchasing 8 x chairs to add to the order that the Village Hall have placed for new tables and chairs. The VH has received a grant of £5k from the Walter Farthing Trust which is sufficient for 12 x tables and 52 chairs. An additional 8 chairs will cost the Parish Council, £343.60 + VAT (we can reclaim the VAT). If the order can be placed this week then delivery can be made at the same time as the VH order and in time for the VE Day Event. The Chairs will then be gifted to the VH instead of the usual community grant. The budgeted grant for VH this year is set at £340.00

See VAT note: Local Authorities and similar bodies VAT Note 749

If you carry out a project or pay for goods and meet the cost entirely from your own resources, and give the goods or services away free to another body, then your activity is non-business. You can reclaim the VAT you have incurred on the goods and services you have given away.

RESOLVED to approve the expenditure and gift the chairs to the Village Hall.

RESOLVED to liaise with the Women's Club and see if there are any goods or services that the Parish Council could take on such as their Broadband costs, which the Parish Council already subsidise.

3393. Other Council Matters (for consideration or report)

3393.1 Community Engagement Team (CET)

(a) February report noted /March report awaited

(b) 2025/26 agreement. It was confirmed that the document had been signed and returned.

3393.2 Woodham Walter Common – Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT). There were no updates to report.

3393.3 Chelmer Valley Landscape Group. There were no updates to report.

3393.4 Climate Action. To receive any updates. Cllr. Rushton reported that he had completed a questionnaire from the RCCE regarding greatest climate concerns.

3393.5 Allotments Report – To receive any updates including receiving the following documents

- (a) Land owner agreement (this has now been signed)
- (b) Parish Council/Allotment Association Agreement (this has now been signed)
- (c) Allotment Association Constitution and Rules & Regulations (adopted at AA AGM)
- (d) Tenant Agreement (await some tenants)

3393.6 Parish & Town Forum – the clerk reported that the meeting had been interesting and useful. Slides and notes shared with councillors. One of the topics had been Emergency Planning, the District Council are updating their processes and request engagement from parishes. They asked for volunteers to register as local points of contact in the event of an emergency.

RESOLVED there were no councillors prepared to provide personal contact information but that the Parish Council contact details could be used and the Parish Clerk would then be able to reach out to councillors/other local residents as required.

3393.7 Village Hall Training – Clerk reported that training at EALC provided by RCCE had been very useful. We await the outcome of investigations regarding the Women's Club constitution/trustees.

3393.8 Wood Corner Deliveries – to report/consider: unfortunately, the resident who has taken delivery of parish magazines, annual reports etc for delivery around the site has now moved. Clerk has contacted Essex County Wide Traveller Unit and been advised by the manager of the site that there are no volunteers and very little interest expressed in receiving publications. Councillor's commented that it was a shame that this liaison is no longer available.

RESOLVED to make enquiries every couple of years to see if a volunteer comes forward. In the meantime, copies of Parish Council publications will be sent to the site manager. The village email is available to any residents who would like to sign up. The parish magazine editor has been informed so that less magazines are printed.

3393.9 Martyn's Law - The government has announced that venues and events will be better equipped to handle potential attacks, as the legislation known as 'Martyn's Law' was granted Royal Assent and officially became law on the 3rd April 2025.

Clerk to attend any training sessions offered to understand the impact for the Parish Council with regards to Bell Meadow. It may be necessary to update Risk Assessments generally and particularly in respect of any events organised.

3393.10 Policy Documents. RESOLVED to review policy documents ahead of the Annual General meeting including noting updates to Model Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and a new Smaller Authorities Proper Practice Panel (SAPPP) formally JPAG.

3394. Highways, Transport & Infrastructure (for consideration or report)

3394.1 Various matters on-going as detailed in the Highways log.

3394.2 99 Bus Service – Love Your Bus Grant – we have received notification that we have been awarded the grant. We are awaiting further information and receipt of the money. However, in order to meet with publishing deadlines, the Village Emporium magazine and Parish News magazine has already been submitted. The deadline for Danbury Focus magazine is coming up. Councillors congratulated the Clerk on the successful application.

3395. Local Issues (for consideration or report)

3395.1 Bell Meadow & Memorial Garden

- (a) Football Goals
 - Ground anchors, works will be undertaken by Cllr. Bunn
 - Football Training – on-going.
- (b) Playground Report
 - Annual Maintenance Inspection is due to take place
- (c) Bell Meadow
 - Tree Survey – to consider quotations receive RESOLVED to instruct PlaceServices to carry out survey.
 - To consider replacement of safety fence opp Bell – RESOLVED to monitor and replace when required.
 - Public Spaces Protection Order – MDC survey – noted.
- (d) Memorial Garden
 - Letter from Highways ref: Horse chestnut requires felling. To note application for TCA approval awaited. Quotation received from Skippers. See Minute Ref: 3387.3

3395.2 Footpaths Report – to receive report of footpath officer. Cllr. Warren reported that FP29 Curling Tye Lane the fly tip remains, although noted that this is on private land and is not obstructing the footpath. The Footbridge in Thriftwood (Woodham Mortimer FP4) has been removed due to it being rotten and will be replaced in the future.

A Public Path Diversion Order regarding Footpath 16 was noted.

3395.3 School Report – to receive report of representative on Governing Body –Cllr Symons. There had been a delay in joining the Canonium Trust while ECC liaise and share relevant information. The Chair of the Governors has confirmed that they are keen to maintain a community engagement governor and Cllr. Symons will complete the relevant form. There have been some staff changes.

3395.4 Essex Police/Crime Reports/Neighbourhood Watch Report.

- (a) Various general reports and newsletters shared
- (b) Meet the Maldon Town Police at Walter's Café on Thursday 17th April and also the Essex Police Fraud Prevention Officer.
- (c) Noted that the lead officer at the Maldon Town Policing Team had been in touch to share contact details.

3395.5 Litter – no reports.

3395.6 Walter's Third Thursday Community Café

- Thursday 17th April – Neighbourhood Plan Info, Maldon Meet The Police session, Essex Police Fraud Prevention Coordinator, Prostate Cancer Awareness (Mark Durham)

3395.7 Woodham Walter Women's Club – To receive update from Women's Club regarding trusteeship and the role the Parish Council may play. Information awaited.

3395.8 Village Hall – VE Day Event on 5th May. Free Tickets now available from the VH website so that they know numbers. There will be cream teas on sale and a bar to cover the costs of the event and fundraise for the Village Hall. During the afternoon a live singer and the school choir are set to perform.

3396. Correspondence – Various items of correspondence have been received and shared with Councillors and where appropriate the public via the website and village emails.

(a) Various Essex Police Newsletters	(b) CVS Newsletter
(c) EALC County Updates/News/Info/Training	(d) Maldon Members Bulletins
(e) Essex Warbler Newsletter	(f) Village News & Events
(g) Rural Partnership	(h) Essex Explorer
(i) Sergeant Matt Dalby (Maldon Town Police)	(j)

3397. Points of Information/Items for future agenda

None

3398. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:

Next scheduled: Annual Meeting with Ordinary Parish Council Meeting – Monday 12th May 2025 at 8pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club. Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 15th May 2025 at 7.30pm in Woodham Walter Village Hall

3399. The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.15pm.

Signed:

John Brown

Date: 12 May 2025