

MINUTES

Minutes Annual General Meeting with Ordinary Meeting of Woodham Walter Parish Council.

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

Monday 12th May 2025

Present:

Cllr. John Brown
Cllr. James Bunn
Cllr. James Rushton
Cllr. Joanna Symons
Cllr. John Tompkins

Others: Jacky Bannerman (Parish Clerk)

County Cllr. Jane Fleming (in attendance 8.35-8.55pm)

Public: None

3400. Election of Chairperson

Nominations were invited for the position of Chairperson. Councillor James Rushton Proposed and Councillor James Bunn Seconded Councillor John Brown. There were no further nominations. All Councillors voted in agreement and Councillor John Brown was duly re-elected to the position of Chairperson.

3401. Election of Vice Chairperson

Nominations were invited for the position of Vice Chairperson. Councillor John Brown Proposed and Councillor James Bunn Seconded Councillor James Rushton. There were no further nominations. All Councillors voted in agreement and Councillor James Rushton was duly elected to the position of Vice Chairperson.

3402. Declarations of Acceptance of Office

All councillors present signed the forms which were then counter signed by the Parish Clerk as proper officer of the council.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Peter Warren and Cllr. Emel Fowler can make their Declaration of Acceptance of Office at or before a later meeting.

3403. To report, approve and record apologies for absence

RESOLVED to accept apologies received from Parish Councillor's Peter Warren and Emel Fowler.

3404. Register of Members Interests Councillors were reminded they need to complete their disclosed interests on the Maldon District Council on-line form if they have not already done so. Councillors were reminded that this should be amended whenever Councillors have an update at any time of the year but needs reviewing at least on an annual basis (usually in May) in order to confirm that all details are up to date.

3405. Disclosure of Interests/Consideration of Dispensations

3405.1 To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, other Pecuniary Interests or Non-Pecuniary Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraphs 6-10 inclusive of 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).

There were no interests declared.

3405.2 It was reported that the General Dispensation as granted in 2023 remains in place until May 2027.

3405.3 RESOLVED to confirm other individual dispensations already granted remain in place until May 2027.

- Cllr. James Rushton - Council business/discussions relating to St Michael's Church as he is a Church Warden.
- Cllr. James Rushton – Council business/discussions relating to Woodham Walter Allotments as he is a plot holder and the Parish Council representative on the Allotments Association committee.
- Cllr. Joanna Symons – Council business/discussions relating to Woodham Walter Women's Club as she is a member and the Joint President of the club.
- Cllr. Peter Warren – Council business/discussions relating to Woodham Walter Women's Club as he is the treasurer of the club.

3405.4 To consider any requests for dispensations.

There were no requests to consider.

3406. Public Forum

There were no members of the public present but one local resident had phoned the clerk earlier in the day to register his objection to the planning application 25/00418/PACUAR, Highfields, Bassetts Lane.

3407. To adopt the Maldon District Council Local Code of Conduct

It was noted that there were no changes. Cllr. John Tompkins proposed and Cllr. James Rushton seconded that the Maldon District Council Local Code of Conduct be adopted. This was agreed by all councillors.

RESOLVED that the Maldon District Council Local Code of Conduct be adopted.

3408. Reviews & Adoptions

3408.1 Model Standing Orders 2025 Update

It was noted that a review had been conducted by NALC including the following changes:

- Updated to comply with new procurement legislation and ensure consistency with Model Financial Regulations. The changes are to 18.a.v, 18.c, 18.d and 18.f. Also updated Model Standing Order 14 to better reflect the Code of Conduct requirements. 14.a, 14.b and 14.c have been removed. We have also changed the language in the document to gender-neutral terms to align with the Civility and Respect Project.
- An update has also been made to reference the council's own policy on dispensations.

RESOLVED to adopt the Model Standing Orders 2025 Update.

3408.2 General Power of Competence

It was reported that the council's General Power of Competence remains in place until May 2027.

3408.3 To consider adopting the following policies, procedures and protocols.

Cllr. James Rushton proposed and Cllr. John Tompkins seconded that the following procedures and policies be adopted, where noted with no changes (NC) or with changes as notes detail. All councillors in agreement.

RESOLVED policies, procedures and protocols listed were adopted.

- (a) Council's complaints procedure (NC)
- (b) Equality and Diversity Policy (NC)
- (c) Media Policy (NC)
- (d) Staff Appraisal Policy & Staffing Committee & Staffing Sub Committee Terms of Reference. (NC)
- (e) Council's Freedom of Information procedure and publication scheme (NC)
- (f) Financial Regulations (*NEW NALC Model Financial Regulations 2025 including relevant adaptations to suit this council*)
 - Investment Strategy (NC)
 - Financial Risk Assessment (NC)
 - Banking Policy (NC)
 - Reserves Policy (NC)
 - Fixed Assets Policy (NC)
 - Review of Fixed Assets (*Updated*)
 - Direct Debits and Regular Payments (*Updated*)
 - Review of Memberships & Subscriptions
- (g) Community Engagement Strategy. (*Change to wording re: Wood Corner*)
- (h) Risk Management Policy (NC)
- (i) Business Continuity Plan (*updates to contact details*)
- (j) Data Breach Process (NC) / Data Protection Policy (NC) / Data Audit Retention Policy
- (k) GDPR Privacy Notice and Policies (NC)
- (l) Annual Contributions to Local Organisations and Rules & Guidance for Grants & Donations Policy (*Including updates with regards to application process*)
- (m) Safeguarding Policy (NC)
- (n) Privacy Policy (NC)
- (o) Training and Development Policy (NC)
- (p) Health & Safety Policy (NC)
- (q) Grievance & Disciplinary Policy (NC)
- (r) Neighbour Consultations Policy
- (s) Biodiversity Policy (NC)
- (t) Climate Action Statement (*Minor update to remove reference to committee*)
- (u) Crime and Disorder Policy (NC)
- (v) Vexatious Complaints Policy (NC)
- (w) Working Groups Policy (NC)
- (x) Recordings at Parish Council Meetings Policy (NC)
- (y) Tree Policy (*update includes reference to independent inspection which will take place every 5 years*)
- (z) Co-option Policy (NC)

3408.4 Councillors consent to email – Councillors confirmed they are happy to receive electronically the summons, Agenda and other papers of the meetings of the council.

RESOLVED that Cllr. Peter Warren and Cllr. Emel Fowler will need to confirm consent at or before a later meeting.

3408.5 Setting the dates, times & place of ordinary meetings of the full council for the year ahead.

RESOLVED the dates of the Parish Council meetings will be on the 2nd Monday of the month at 8pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club. To note that meetings may take place virtually (if/when Legislation allows for this), or in the Woodham Walter Village Hall. Any changes to these arrangements will be duly notified. With the noted exception of the August meeting which will only take place if there is urgent business or planning applications to discuss and the date will be duly notified.

3408.6 To consider the following policies, procedures and protocols which are subject to further review.

(a) Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover. To receive the report of the Clerk.

RESOLVED to accept the report of the Parish Clerk. Subject to any further quotations received, the policy will be renewed with Zurich.

(b) Risk Assessments

RESOLVED that the Clerk will continue to arrange for Risk Assessment to be updated regularly.

(c) Emergency Plan

Noted that amendments to contact details had been made. RESOLVED that the document needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure it is up to date.

(d) Action Plan

RESOLVED that this document needs to be reviewed.

(e) Inventory of land and assets

RESOLVED that this document needs to be reviewed.

(f) Tree Inspections

- *The Biannual Inspections have been undertaken together with any recommendations as to specialist advice and action required, with quotations being sought where necessary. The implementation of any recommendations will be reported to a subsequent meeting. It was noted that instructions to fell a horse chestnut on the Memorial Garden had recently been approved by MDC and contractor instructed to carry out work.*
- *Essex Wildlife Trust will be chased for latest inspection information.*
- *An Independent Tree Inspection is due to take place and will be reported at future meeting.*

3408.7 To agree/confirm Councillors appointed to Working Groups and as representatives on Committees and as Councillors with special responsibilities. To appoint non-councillors to Parish Council Working Groups.

(a) Woodham Walter Primary School Governing Body: Cllr. Joanna Symons

(b) Woodham Walter Allotment Association: Cllr. James Rushton, Mrs Jane Weedon and Mrs Sue Cumming

(c) Bell Meadow Village Association: Vacancy

(d) Village Design Statement/Neighbourhood Plan assessment: Cllr. John Tompkins

(e) Footpaths Officer: Cllr. Peter Warren

(f) Tree Officer: Cllr. Peter Warren

(g) Broadband, Website, Emails, IT: Cllr. John Brown

(h) Defibrillator: Cllr. John Tompkins

(i) Crime & Neighbourhood Watch: Vacancy

(j) Climate Action & Biodiversity: Cllr. James Rushton

RESOLVED to accept the listed councillors and defer vacancies to future meeting.

3410. To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14th April 2025.

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

3411. Matters Arising - Progress report (not for resolution)

3411.1 The report compiled by the Clerk will be shared with councillors. Matters for report are contained within the agenda.

3412. Planning – APPLICATIONS RECEIVED (for consideration or report)

3412.1 25/00383/TCA St Michael's Church

T1- Prunus – Fell

RESOLVED to write with no objections subject to the tree officer. However, to comment that it would be a shame to see the tree go and to note that it is just a stem rather than the whole tree.

3412.2 25/00418/PACUAR Highfields, Bassetts Lane

Application for prior approval for the change of use of an agricultural building to one dwellinghouse (use Class C3) and for associated operational development.

RESOLVED to repeat previous responses and to note that neighbours had again made objections.

3412.3 There were no further planning applications received.

3413. Planning – DECISIONS (for consideration or report)

3413.1 25/00253/TCA Memorial Garden, Church Hill

ALLOWED TO PROCEED

T2 – Horse Chestnut – Fell

Parish Council application following Highways requirement to fell.

3413.2 2500215/PDE 11 Rectory Road

PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

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.

3413.3 25/00085/FUL Warren Golf Club

APPROVE

Erection of a 4x4m treated timber shed to receive the irrigation pumps currently location within an existing greenkeeping shed, due for demolition under permission FUL/MAL/22/00620

3413.4 Decisions Awaited

a) 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.

3413.5 Appeal Decisions Awaited

a) 23/00154/LDE Annexe at Guys Farm, Manor Road

WWPC Response: No Comment

Remains outstanding – Final comments April 2024

3414. Other Planning Matters /Other MDC Matters (for consideration or report)

3414.1 Enforcement – There were no updates to report.

3415. Woodham Walter Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr. John Tompkins

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

- There had been 105 responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Place Survey which represents about a 42% return rate.
- There will be a display of the results of the Place Survey and Business Survey at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- Although there is a small team, more volunteers are needed to produce the final Neighbourhood Plan document
- Cllr. Tompkins is meeting with volunteers with regards to the different subject areas

3416. To receive reports of the County and District Councillor's.

It was noted that District Councillors were not in attendance. Cllr. Morgan has provided information on topics such as the EV Charging infrastructure and water meter telegraph poles. MDC regularly send briefings which are shared with councillors and the public via village email and website as appropriate.

County Cllr. Fleming reported that the new Maldon Town Council Mayor is Cllr. Driver. County Councillors will have funding available for local good causes including for large gatherings or events.

The Members pot hole list for our area is due on 6th June and can include potholes, footways, signs, vegetation, railings, bollards. Clerk to provide a list including faded lines and also enquire about the red road surface at the village entrances.

3417. Financial Matters (for consideration or report)

3417.1 To receive the Summary of Accounts to date. This includes transactions since April meeting.

Date	Unity Trust Instant Access Account	Transaction Detail	Amount In	Amount Out	Balance
01-Apr-25	Balance		-		26,605.94
14-Apr-25	Precept		34,213.00	-	60,818.94
15-Apr-25	Transferred to Current Account (April Debits)			4,300.00	56,518.94
13-May-25	Transferred to Current Account (May Debits)			1,700.00	54,818.94
			34,213.00	4,300.00	54,818.94

Date	Unity Trust Current Account	Transaction Detail	Amount In	Amount Out	Balance
01/04/2025	Balance				2,998.24
02/04/2025	Debits #21(formally #170) RCCE			2,069.17	929.07
04/04/2025	Debits #1			118.80	810.27
15/04/2025	Debits #2			25.20	785.07
15/04/2025	Transfer (April Debits)		4,300.00		5,085.07
16/04/2025	Debits #7-8, 10-16, 20)			2,155.07	2,930.00
17/04/2025	Debits #3			73.04	2,856.96
18/04/2025	Debits #4			1,095.11	1,761.85
23/04/2025	Credit #2 (Party Tent Inv#22)		125.00		1,886.85
25/05/2025	Debits #5			205.38	1,681.47
30/04/2025	Debits #9			6.00	1,675.47
13/05/2025	Transferred from Instant Access (May Debits)		1,700.00		3,375.47
13/05/2025	May Debits			2,696.03	679.44
			6,125.00	8,443.80	679.44

3417.2 Summary of Payments for May.

Ref:	December	Payee	Method	Net	VAT	Gross
#17		St Michael's Church (Allotment landowner agreement)	BACS	16.00	-	16.00
#19		Printing (Bus Flyer/questionnaire) (await - estimate)	BACS	100.00	20.00	120.00
#18		Point Graphics Ltd Danbury Focus Magazine (April Bus Advert) (EST)	BACS	235.00	47.00	282.00
#21		RCCE (Housing Needs Survey) (2024/25#170) April Debit	BACS	1,724.31	344.86	2,069.17
#22		A&J Lighting Solutions	DD	21.00	4.20	25.20
#23		Npower (ESTIMATE)	DD	69.56	3.48	73.04
#24		Mrs J Bannerman (Salary/Allowance)	BACS	1,118.77	-	1,118.77
#25		Nest Pension (Employer £80.86 Employee £129.38)	DD	210.24	-	210.24
#26-30		Barclaycard	DD	211.55	40.46	252.01
#31		Woodham Walter Village Hall (Walter's)	BACS	30.00	-	30.00
#32		Unity Trust Bank (Charges)	DD	6.00	-	6.00
#33		Point Graphics Ltd Danbury Focus Magazine (May Bus Advert) (EST)	BACS	235.00	47.00	282.00
#34		Hullbridge Design & Print (Annual Report/NP Sheets)	BACS	308.50	2.10	310.60
#35		Zurich Insurance	BACS	388.17	-	388.17
						-
		Total		2,598.79	97.24	2,696.03

Date	Barclaycard Payments (Estimated April Statement)	Net	VAT	Gross
25/03/2025	MDC (Parking for Parish & Town Forum) #26	2.67	0.53	3.20
27/03/2025	Uttlesford DC (Parking for Training at EALC) #27	3.50	0.70	4.20
30/03/2025	Ring Central Annual Subscription #28	155.88	31.18	187.06
08/04/2025	SpyraBase (Ground anchors) #29	40.25	8.05	48.30
18/04/2025	Walter's Café (Refreshments) #30	9.25	-	9.25
		211.55	40.46	252.01
Date	Barclaycard Payments (Estimated May Statement)	Net	VAT	Gross
15/05/2025	Tesco (Refreshments for Walter's/APM)	20.00		20.00
18/05/2024	Microsoft 365 Renewal	70.82	14.17	84.99
		90.82	14.17	104.99

All invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO. Where estimated, the Clerk will await final invoices/payslips. The BACS payments will be drawn up by the Parish Clerk and require authorisation by councillor signatory by Payment Date of 16th May 2025 or as soon as possible.

3417.3 Review of Bank Statements, Credit Card Statements and Account sheets for March (with update) and April. Cllr. Bunn confirmed that he had reviewed the documents and found them to be reconciled correctly.

3417.4 Projector – it was noted that Woodham Mortimer PC have offered to loan.

3417.5 End of Financial Year to 31st March 2025 on-going. The Clerk confirmed that the files are due to be sent to the Internal Auditor the following day.

3417.6 Community funding – to consider taking over the Woodham Walter Women's Club Broadband Account in lieu of an annual donation. Await confirmation of costs.

3417.7 Payroll – noted this has now been resolved and an account set up with 1st Money in order to report to HMRC and produce payslips at cost of £12.90/month.

3418. Other Council Matters (for consideration or report)

3418.1 Community Engagement Team (CET)

(a) March report noted/April report awaited

3418.2 Woodham Walter Common – Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT). Invitation to attend a walk including viewing bat boxes. Clerk to arrange.

3418.3 Chelmer Valley Landscape Group. It was noted that the group will attend the Annual Parish Meeting and give a short presentation.

3418.4 Climate Action. There were no updates.

3418.5 Allotments Report – To receive any updates

(a) Tenant Agreement (await some tenants)

(b) A new tenant has come forward for one of the ½ plots.

3418.6 Society of Local Council Clerks Training Day. It was agreed that the Clerk should attend this session.

3418.7 Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 15th May

- Annual report distribution has been completed
- Help set up hall etc will be done at Walter's Café and prior to the evening event.

- Refreshments – Tina Warren and Kim Gavan have kindly offered to serve.
- Minutes to 2024 meeting and matters arising have been shared with councillors. Copies available at the event.

3419. Highways, Transport & Infrastructure (for consideration or report)

- 3419.1 Various matters on-going as detailed in the Highways log (faded lines at Bassetts/Spring Elms junction)
- 3419.2 99 Bus Service – Love Your Bus Grant. RESOLVED that the Clerk will complete and return the paperwork.
- 3419.3 Westcombe Park, Heybridge - Road Works – Diversion routes noted and concerns expressed at the likely impact on the village as motorists seek alternative routes.
- 3419.4 Telegraph poles (Mead Pastures and Top Road) for water meter network. Noted.
- 3419.5 EV Charging Infrastructure. As there is no incentive for local organisations, it is not considered realistic for the village as there are no suitable locations.

3420. Local Issues (for consideration or report)

3420.1 Bell Meadow & Memorial Garden

- (a) Football Goals
- Ground anchors – update from Cllr. Bunn – ongoing.
 - Football Training - ongoing
- (b) Playground Report
- It was noted that the annual maintenance inspection and annual safety inspection are due to take place
 - The clerk will order a new gate closer.
- (c) Bell Meadow
- Tree Survey – await report
- (d) Memorial Garden
- Skippers instructed to carry out works to fell Horse chestnut. Although Councillors continue to be disappointed that the tree will be lost.

3420.2 Footpaths Report – Cllr. Warren had reported FP12 is completely blocked by a very large dead tree that has fallen across the path in the woodland between the E&S Pumping Station and the golf course. It's too large for the usual volunteers so The Warren Estate have been requested to deal with it. Weed growth has taken off so paths are starting to close in. FP14 from the Church has been cut by the farmer.

3420.3 School Report – to receive report of representative on Governing Body –Cllr Symons reported that she is completing a form with regards to Community Governance for the new multi-academy trust.

3420.4 Essex Police/Crime Reports/Neighbourhood Watch Report.

- (a) Various general reports and newsletters shared
- (b) Meet the Police at Walter's Café on Thursday 15th May.

3420.5 Litter – No reports.

3420.6 Walter's Third Thursday Community Café

- Thursday 15th May – Neighbourhood Plan Info, Maldon Meet The Police session, Maldon CVS

3420.7 Woodham Walter Women's Club – To receive any updates from Women's Club regarding trusteeship and the role the Parish Council may play. Awaiting advice from RCCE.

3420.8 Village Hall – VE Day Event on 5th May. To note the community event was well attended and enjoyed. Due to oversubscription the hall needed to use a party tent. Councillors confirmed that no charge would be made for the tent as this had been a community event.

3421. 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

3422. Points of Information/Items for future agenda

3423. Date of Next Parish Council Meeting:

Next scheduled: Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 15th May 2025 at 7.30pm in Woodham Walter Village Hall
 Ordinary Parish Council Meeting – Monday 9th June 2025 at 8pm in Woodham Walter Women's Club.

3424. The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

Signed:

Date: