

# Little Waldingfield Parish Council

**Acting Clerk:** Chris White, Walnut Lodge, Haymarket Little Waldingfield CO10 0SY.  
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## **Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 14 March 2024 in the Parish Room.**

**Present:** Cllr Tim Sheppard (Chair), Cllr Robert Wheeler, Cllr Tina Impett, Cllr Chris White (Acting Clerk)

**Attending:** BDC Cllrs Margaret Maybury & Paul Clover; No Members of the Public attended.

### **1. Apologies and approval of absences.**

Cllr Matt Foster tendered his apologies, and his absence was approved.  
SCC Cllr Phillip Faircloth-Mutton sent his apologies.

### **2. Declarations of Interests by Members and Requests for Dispensations.**

None declared or requested.

### **3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 30 January 2024.**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 January 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair.

### **4. Reports by County Councillor and District Councillors.**

The DCC's report and the Babergh DC Parish Council briefing notes for February and March were reviewed. DCC Maybury also reported on the extensive works underway by Gigaclear in Acton, Great Waldingfield, and Lavenham to install underground fibre broadband cabling as part of Project Gigabit, the government's flagship £5 billion programme to enable hard-to-reach communities to access ultra-fast broadband. This is unlikely to affect Little Waldingfield as the village already has ultrafast fibre-to-the-home overhead cabling installed by Openreach.

A question was raised concerning the progress of the BDC proposal to introduce town car parking charges: DC Clover replied that the proposal is now due to go before BMSDC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **5. Public Forum.**

No members of the public were present.

### **6. Routine Correspondence**

- a. Councillors reviewed the correspondence circulated by the Clerk and no further actions were required.
- b. SALC Survey – It was agreed that Cllrs White and Wheeler would coordinate the PC's response.

### **7. Clerks Report**

Member reviewed the acting Clerks report and, apart from the ongoing items, it was agreed that no additional actions were required.

### **8. Planning Applications**

- a. Application for Agricultural Determination DC/24/00545 – Haymarket Farm.  
Members noted it was determined that formal planning approval was not required and the application was granted pursuant to permitted development rights. The development had to be carried out strictly in accordance with the details submitted.

## 9. Finances

### a. RFO's Report:

Members reviewed RFO's report and noted the recent receipts and payments, the Bank balances @ 29 February 2024 of £22742.15 (Treasurers Acct) and £2553.44 (BusBank Acct), and expenditure vs budget.

### b. Approval of Bank Reconciliation @ 29 February 2024.

The Bank Reconciliation prepared by the acting Clerk and checked by Cllr Sheppard, was reviewed, approved, and signed by Councillors.

### c. Review and Approval of Payments Presented & Online Authorisations.

Members approved the following payments: LW Parish Room £42.00 Venue Hire Jan- Mar24; C White £49.55 – Office expenses; JC Bullard Ltd £300.00 – Hedge and verge cutting B1115.

## 10. Governance:

### a. Consider dates and draft agendas for 2024/25.

The draft agendas presented by the Clerk were reviewed and approved by members. The dates for the next 3 meetings were agreed: Wednesday 08 May 24 (AGM); Wednesday 05 Jun 24 (Audit and financial matters only); Wednesday 10 July 24. Further meeting dates for 2024/25 will be set at the May meeting.

### b. Review Internal Audit Report 2022/23 Action Plan.

The acting Clerk confirmed that all the recommendations and comments made in the 2022/23 Internal Audit Report and listed in the Action Plan had now been addressed with no further measures required.

### c. Review Internal Controls check for 2023/24.

The acting Clerk informed members that the Cllr Impett had completed the Internal Control check and there were no deficiencies or items requiring attention.

### d. Review and approve LWPC Internal Controls Statement.

The Statement on Internal Control 2023-24 was reviewed by members and approved.

### e. Confirm Internal Auditors 2023/24 F/Y

The acting Clerk confirmed that SALC had been appointed as Internal Auditors and the 2023/24 Audit will be carried out in the week 13 – 17 May 2024.

### f. Recruitment of new Councillors and Clerk/RFO.

Members discussed the urgent need to recruit additional councillors to ensure the viability and continuance of the Parish Council in its ability to carry on working on behalf of the villagers in making decisions in their best interest. If the Parish Council was forced to dissolve, then all decision making would be placed in the hands of the Babergh District Council. It was agreed to mount an intensive recruitment drive following the May AGM.

## 11. Highways & Footpaths:

### a. FPWG report.

Cllr Wheeler reported that the SCC reporting tool was working well with any reported footpath issues being properly dealt with in a timely manner. The FPWG were also discussing the possibility of adjusting the timing of the first cuts according to initial growth patterns.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

**b. Village gates update.**

It was not possible to progress this matter due to the lack of the requested information from the SCC.

**c. Alternate locations for SID Devices.**

The acting Clerk informed members that currently there were only 2 locations for the Speed Indicator Devices, and under current regulations SID’s should move location every month. Additional potential locations that would conform to siting regulations had been identified in the region of the Telephone Box, close to the junction with Grove Avenue, and the approach to the bends at Haymarket when leaving the village. Following discussions it was proposed by Cllr Wheeler, seconded by Cllr Impett that, initially, the locations at Grove Avenue and Haymarket should be considered. This was agreed unanimously. The acting Clerk informed members that it was necessary to obtain the prior approval of residents in the vicinity of the sites and a consultation letter would therefore be sent out.

**12. Rural Bus Service improvements.**

A report was presented on the Monks Eleigh PC led proposal for a digitally connected on-demand small bus to link the villages in the Brett Valley with the regular scheduled buses in Hadleigh and Lavenham from where passengers can connect to services to Ipswich, Colchester, Sudbury and Bury St Edmunds. A steering committee of representatives from several Parishes had been formed to agree the process going forward. Members agreed in principle with the scheme, with the proviso that existing bus services would not be adversely affected. It was further agreed that Cllr Wheeler would represent LWPC on the steering committee.

**13. Matters arising from 30 January Meeting:**

**a. D Day 2024 events update.**

There has been general progress in putting the agreed arrangements for the event in place, however sourcing a Fish and Chips van at a viable cost was proving difficult.

**b. BMSDC Tree and Wildflower Scheme update.**

Information on the exact species of trees and wildflowers was being sought so that a planting scheme could be established.

**c. Community Emergency Plan update and meeting report.**

The acting Clerk presented a report on the latest Surrounding Parishes Community Emergency Planning Meeting. As a result, the LW draft emergency plan had been amended on advice received from the SCC emergency Planning Officer. Members reviewed the revised plan and agreed the next steps were to seek volunteers to act as coordinators and points of contact in the event of an emergency arising in the village which required residents being evacuated from their homes to a place of safety.

**14. Questions to the Chair.**

No questions were raised.

**15. Date of next Meeting.**

The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 08 May 2024 at 7:30pm.

The meeting closed at 9:10pm.

Signed: .....

Date: .....