CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIR'S REPORT FULL COUNCIL

Date: 27 August 2026

Clerk's Probationary Review

I am pleased to report that the Clerk's probationary review has now been completed. The final report has been signed off and placed on the Clerk's confidential personnel file. Following the successful completion of the probationary period, the Clerk has been confirmed in post. I am also pleased to note that all parties are satisfied with the outcome.

Staff Meetings

Individual meetings have been arranged with all members of staff. Meetings with office-based staff have now been completed. Due to operational demands and the current workload within the Open Spaces Team, their meetings were postponed and will be rescheduled for September.

Community Art Class

I recently attended a community art class run by a local resident and held monthly at Chigwell Library. The sessions are free of charge and open to all residents, whilst also helping to encourage greater use of the library.

During discussions, the possibility was raised of participants creating artwork and paintings depicting local Chigwell landmarks, which could subsequently be displayed within the Parish Council offices. This is a positive initiative that celebrates local talent whilst helping to showcase Chigwell's heritage and community spirit.

Community Litter Pick

On Friday 14 August, I had the pleasure of joining a community litter pick on the Limes Farm Estate alongside the Chigwell Community Champions.

My thanks go to Lynne Moir, Councillor Lisa Morgan and all the volunteers who gave up their time and worked extremely hard in challenging weather conditions to help improve the local environment.

Committee Room Refurbishment

The refurbishment of the Committee Room is now nearing completion. I would like to place on record my thanks to Robert and Sam for their hard work and commitment in delivering the improvements.

The new large-screen television will be installed shortly. In addition, new maps, photographs and displays highlighting Chigwell's history and local landmarks will be introduced. Councillor photographs, together with names and ward details, will also be displayed. Subject to agreement, artwork produced by participants of the Chigwell Library art class may also be exhibited within the room.

Thames Water Incident

I would like to thank all Councillors for their support during the recent Thames Water incident. Many Members made themselves available to residents, responded to enquiries and assisted in managing concerns from members of the public.

Whilst the loss of water supply was an inconvenience for everyone affected, there was also a considerable amount of misinformation circulating locally. Unfortunately, this was not assisted by the delay in clear communications from Thames Water during the early stages of the incident. I am grateful to Members for their professionalism and support throughout.

Joint Councillor Meeting

A meeting involving Parish, District and County Councillors was held at the Parish Offices on 26 August and was open to all elected representatives serving Chigwell.

Thank you to all those who attended and contributed constructively to the discussions. It was agreed that such meetings provide a valuable opportunity to address both major strategic issues and more routine local matters affecting residents. Members were supportive of continuing this collaborative approach, and a further meeting is planned for October, with the date and time to be confirmed.

A detailed report from the meeting will be circulated shortly.

Christmas Tree Lighting Event 2026

This year's Christmas Tree Lighting event will take place on Saturday 5 December 2026 at 6.00pm.

As with previous years, volunteer assistance will be required on the evening, particularly with event support, food preparation, refreshments, stewarding and first aid. Whilst Council staff very kindly stepped in to assist last year, this is one of the Parish Council's flagship community events, and I would encourage all Councillors to support and attend wherever possible.

The Warden of St Mary's Church has agreed to raise the event at the forthcoming Ministers' Meeting, and the date has already been diarised by the churches.

This year I am keen to encourage participation from all sections of our community and will be speaking with individual Councillors regarding opportunities to engage additional community groups. CROADS has also been invited to participate and is currently considering the request.

I am delighted to confirm that this year's lights will be switched on by Lynne Moir, Chigwell Community Champion, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the local community. Further plans for the event are progressing and will be shared with Members nearer the time.

Public Perception of the Parish Council

At the previous meeting, Councillors were invited to consider ways in which the public perception of the Parish Council could be improved.

Members have now had an opportunity to reflect on this matter, and I would welcome any suggestions or ideas that could help strengthen engagement with residents and further enhance the Council's reputation and visibility within the community.

Councillor Reminders

Councillor Surgeries

The next Councillor Surgery will take place on Saturday 5 September 2026 and will be attended by Councillor Morgan and Councillor Skingsley.

I would remind all Councillors that surgery dates were agreed in advance and that Members are responsible for arranging cover should they be unable to attend their allocated session.

Training

I would again encourage all Councillors to make full use of the training opportunities available through the EALC. Details of upcoming courses are available from the Clerk.

It was also discussed at the recent Councillor meeting that Epping Forest District Council intends to provide planning-related training. Given the constantly evolving nature of planning legislation and policy, it was agreed that Parish Councillors should seek to attend wherever possible. Although the Parish Council acts in an advisory capacity on planning matters, it is important that Members are equipped with the knowledge necessary to make informed recommendations.

Code of Conduct

It has recently been brought to our attention that there have been instances where the Councillor Code of Conduct may not have been fully adhered to.

In response, the Clerk is investigating arrangements for all Councillors to undertake refresher Code of Conduct training. In addition, copies of the current Code of Conduct will be circulated to all Members for signature and return, with signed copies retained on file.

I appreciate that some Councillors may have completed this training on numerous occasions previously. However, periodic refresher training serves as a useful reminder of the standards expected of elected Members and demonstrates the Council's ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards of conduct and governance.

Prepared by:
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