



MINUTES

Virtual Meeting: COUNCIL

Date: 11th February 2021

Time: 8.00pm

Hosted from: COUNCIL OFFICES, HAINAULT ROAD, CHIGWELL

PRESENT: Councillors (9)

Councillors; Pranav Bhanot (Chairman), Deborah Barlow, Jamie Braha, Kewal Chana, #Rochelle Hodds, Alan Lion (Vice-Chairman), Faiza Rizvi, Mona Sehmi and Barry Scrutton.

Officers (1)

Mark Hembury – Responsible Financial Officer/Cemetery Registrar

Also in Attendance

There were members of the public in attendance.

for part of the meeting.

20.233 RECORDING OF MEETINGS

NOTED that in accordance with Standing Order 3 (1) photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting may take place.

20.234 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)

Members **NOTED** that apologies have been received from Councillor Naveed Akhtar.

20.235 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

Members **NOTED** that there were no other absences.

20.236 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

After full and in-depth discussions, it was then moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that;

- This information was **NOTED**.
- The minutes for the meeting held on 31st December 2020 would be amended, in accord to the suggestions proposed by Councillor Lion, then duly considered at a subsequent meeting.
- The minutes for the meeting held on 14th January 2021 were **CONFIRMED**.



20.237 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members **NOTED** that the Councillor Scrutton declared a non-pecuniary interest in the matter of payments for ‘employer support’ and ‘GDPR support’ to Wirehouse employment services, on the grounds that he is a Trustee of the Grange Farm Centre; a charitable trust which has engaged the services of this organisation.

20.238 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman proposed that in view of the absence of the Clerk to the Council, it would be more efficient in this circumstance that questions are received by the council verbally.

After brief discussion, it was **AGREED** that questions would be received verbally.

- Q.** The crime figures published on the council agenda don't mention the commonest crime in Chigwell, violent and sexual assault. In the last three years the [police.uk](https://www.police.uk) website recorded a total of 748 vehicle crimes, 359 burglaries and 1,133 violent and sexual offences in the whole parish. The attending Member of the public stated that the Chigwell Resident's Association has been advised by senior police officers that 70% of these violent and sexual offences are reported domestic violence. Given Chigwell residents are more at risk of harm in their own home from someone they live with than of being burgled or having their car stolen, why does your report not mention these figures and how are Councillors proposing to highlight and counter what is far and away the most serious and frequent crime in Chigwell?
- A.** After in-depth discussions pertaining to this matter Councillor Lion questioned what action this council should pursue in response to this issue. After further full and in-depth discussions, the Chairman proposed that the originators of the report, namely Essex Police, should be asked to provide the information, which appears to be deficient. This information would then be duly received by the council, to enable an informed decision on how the council may respond.
- Q.** On the 10th December 2020, I submitted a written question to the council about the ‘declaration of a climate emergency’ I was told that the council had agreed to discuss the matter at a subsequent meeting. My question is when would be the likely date of that meeting?
- A.** The Chairman confirmed that this response was given at a previous meeting, and further suggested that due consideration would be given to this matter at the next meeting. Councillor Lion stated that he has spoken to the sustainability officer at EFDC on this matter and proposed that this individual could be invited to address the council on this and associated issues or supply the council with information on this subject. The Chairman reminded Members that the council had recently approved the allocation of £15,000, towards the monitoring of ‘air quality’ in the Parish. After further discussions, it was agreed that this matter would be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Management committee, to be held on 25th February 2021.



- Q.** Councillor Braha stated he had recently seen a question which pertained to the matter of excessive vehicular speeding along the High road towards the school, the question asked whether this council would consider lobbying the relevant authorities to install 'Highway' signage, which advised motorists of the respective speed limits.
- A.** Councillor Lion reminded Members he is a representative for Epping Forest on the Local Highways Panel, and that evidence for a scheme that we would like to introduce could be provided to the LHP, for consideration. After further discussions, pertaining to this, and other 'Highways' issues, it was agreed that Councillor Braha would provide Councillor Lion, with further information on this matter, which could be considered by the LHP.

20.239 COMMUNICATIONS

The RFO advised Members that he has not had time to deal with this matter.

20.240 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT

Members **NOTED** the documents that had been received and/or deposited with the Clerk to the council during January 2021.

20.241 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

a) List of Payments/Incomes/Account Balances

In response to a question from Councillor Barlow, Members were advised that 'Phase two' of the Courtland drive works will concern the 'back section of Courtland drive, alongside the brook. An attending member of the public advised that the council should double check before they pay 'Lucas landscapes' and assure they are satisfied with the work. After further discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The list of payments signed up to 5th February 2021 be **APPROVED**, and that the summary of income received and the account balance, at that date be **NOTED**.
- Councillor Barlow and Councillor Braha would attend the office to countersign the respective 'list of payments.' Arrangements would be made to sign the respective payments outside the office.

b) Reconciliation of Parish Council Bank Accounts with the Accounts Package

After brief discussions, Councillor Barlow **PROPOSED**, and Councillor Braha **SECONDED**, that the reconciliation of the Parish Council Bank Accounts with the Finance Accounts will be checked, confirmed and signed accordingly on Friday 12th February 2021.

c) Confirmation of Salary Payments

After brief discussions, Councillor Barlow **PROPOSED**, and Councillor Braha **SECONDED**, that the staff salary payments have been examined and signed as being correct.



20.242 PARISH PLAN PRESENTATION by Rural Community Council of (RCCE)

Members were reminded that this council is a member of the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) which provides a unique range of services geared to supporting the needs of Parish Councils and their local communities. These services include a network of field officers to support the development of a Parish Plan. Members were further reminded that at the meeting held on 14th January 2021, it was resolved that a Parish Plan for Chigwell would be progressed.

Members were advised that a representative from the RCCE has been invited to attend this meeting to assist Members' consideration of the way in which the described intent will be progressed and developed into a robust and sustainable Parish Plan.

Councillor Lion advised Members that he has spoken to the RCCE Community Engagement Officer. She stated that in view of the absence of the Clerk to the Council, she preferred the scheduled presentation be deferred to a subsequent meeting. He further advised Members that the RCCE have supplied him with a substantive documentation stack, which would be very useful for the council to consider, which he will circulate to Members, for their information.

After further brief discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- Councillor Lion would circulate the respective documentation to Members.
- This matter would be deferred to a subsequent meeting.

20.243 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Members were reminded that as Parish Councillors there are certain obligations, as a representative on this council, to Ward residents, therefore it is your implied responsibility to meet these obligations. To do this effectively Members should be knowledgeable of the matters being considered at council and committee meetings and their regular attendance of at these meetings, in tandem with the assimilation of the associated documentation is an integral aspect of their responsibilities to the electorate.

The Chairman stated that it has been an observation of the Clerk that the attendance of members at committee meetings has been poor in recent months, and on several occasions, committee meetings have been declared inquorate, due to the non-attendance of Members.

After further discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.

20.244 CHIGWELL CRIME STATISTICS

Members were reminded that at the meeting held on 19th June 2020, it was resolved to receive information from the Community Policing Team, pertaining to policing operations in Chigwell, on a regular basis. This data received from the EFDC Police Community Support Officer, includes the crime statistics for Chigwell Row, Chigwell Village, Grange Hill and Lambourne, up to 29th January 2021, along with relevant good news stories.



Members **CONSIDERED** this information. In response to discussions, the Chairman highlighted to Members that a one-hour, virtual Q&A session is being hosted by the Essex Police; Community Safety Team, on 25th February 2021, 12pm.

After further brief discussions pertaining to this data, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.

20.245 PARISH COUNCIL EMAIL ACCOUNT PROPOSAL

Members were reminded of the agreed proposal to establish specified 'Parish Council' email accounts, to be used by Councillors, exclusively for council business and advised that correspondence, dated 2nd February 2021 from the appointed IT Consultant pertaining to this matter has been received.

Members **CONSIDERED** this information and the respective proposal.

After discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- This proposal would be formally initiated in May 2021.
- A single address would be set-up for Councillor Lion, to enable a test of the service, to ensure it is functional.

20.246 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT PROPOSAL

Members were advised that International Women's Day (IWD) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. Marked annually on 8th March, this is a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Significant activities are witnessed worldwide as a wide variety of groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality. International Women's Day (IWD) is one of the most significant days of the year to, celebrate women's achievements, raise awareness about women's equality and lobby for accelerated gender parity. The campaign theme for International Women's Day 2021 is '*Choose To Challenge*'.

Members **CONSIDERED** the proposal as drafted on the respective appendix and whether to undertake an International Women's Day (IWD) event in Chigwell.

After full and in-depth discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- An opportunity would be afforded at a subsequent meeting for the council to receive feedback from attending members of the public, on the manner in which this event could be commemorated next year, and what other possible actions the council may consider in support of women in the Parish.



20.247 CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

Members *NOTED* there were no consultation documents.

20.248 MEMBERS' REPORTS

a) Essex County Council; Local Highways Panel (LHP) – Epping Forest Branch

Councillor Lion reminded Members he is the representative for Chigwell and Loughton Broadway and advised that he has proposed several investigations into traffic issues. One concerns errant vehicular parking along the footway, at the Chigwell recreation ground, which causes the obstruction of this footway, which is an inconvenience to buggy and wheelchair users. He further stated that this matter is scheduled to be considered at the LHP meeting in March 2021. A second investigation pertains to the Lambourne road crossing, opposite the Public house, in response to residents concerns that the present turning arrogance requires adjustment. Councillor Lion further advised members that he has asked that warning signs advising motorists of the presence of horse-riders has also been requested.

b) Water leaks and Thames Water service failures; Grange Hill & Chigwell Row

Councillor Lion stated that he has written to Thames Water about issues pertaining to the services provided by Thames Water and the long-standing matter of water leaks. He further advised that he is still awaiting a response.

c) Oak Farm – Vicarage Lane

Councillor Lion advised that incidences of flooding have occurred in the vicinity of Oak Farmhouse, on Vicarage Lane and that he has raised the matter with the relevant authorities.

d) Community Special Constables Scheme

Councillor Lion advised Members that he had a meeting with a representative of Essex Police, concerning the Community Special Constables Scheme, then updated Members of the associated expenditures and requirements for this project.

e) Errant vehicular parking – Chigwell Recreation Ground

Councillor Lion advised Members that he has asked the Community Policing Officer to instigate a 'ticketing' arrangement, to prevent offenders from obstructing this footway.

After brief discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and *RESOLVED* that:

- This information be *NOTED*.



20.249 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

a) ECC Footway renovation and repair project

Councillor Lion advised members that an extensive project is being undertaken to refurbish several footways in Chigwell.

b) Oak Lodge Avenue Footpath

Councillor Barlow advised Members that she has spoken to Lee Scott about an area of pavement at the corner of Oak Lodge avenue. She further advised members that she has received complaints from residents, pertaining to the works undertaken by ECC, on this footpath. In response, Councillor Lion suggested that these concerns would be further investigated.

c) Incidences of excessive speed on Lechmere Avenue

Councillor Sehmi advised members that she has again observed vehicles traveling at excessive speeds, on Lechmere Avenue. She further stated that she had received a specific complaint from a resident pertaining to an accident which recently occurred, which involved a TfL vehicle.

After brief discussion, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.

20.250 REPORT OF THE CLERK

The Clerk reported that;

- Members are reminded of the meetings of the Communications committee, scheduled for 17th February 2021, at 7pm and the Management committee scheduled for 25th February 2021, immediately after the Planning committee meeting, which is scheduled for 7.30pm.
- Following the most recent advisories pertaining to Public Health, the Adult Fitness Equipment, sited at Chigwell Row recreation ground and Chigwell Station Green is temporarily closed. Accordant signage has been erected.
- A number of online training opportunities have been made available by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC), which include Standing Orders, Financial regulations and Law/Procedures. Details have been sent to all Members by electronic means.
- He will be engaged in volunteering duties in support of the Epping Forest Foodbank, on Saturday 13th February 2021 and Saturday 27th February 2021.
- A distinctive wristwatch of reasonable value was found by staff, immediately outside the Parish office, in mid-August 2020.

After discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.



20.251 REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reported that;

- Attended a planning consultation with other Parish Councillors
- Attended a meeting with the Chair of the Chigwell Resident's Association.
- Attended a meeting with the Clerk to the Council.

After discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.

20.252 MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD TO THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

After discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that the following matters would be brought forward to the next meeting:

- The council's participation in the Community Special Constable Scheme
- The proposal and progression of a Parish Plan
- Update on the Community Bus Service – Vaccination support program

20.253 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

Members were reminded that in accordance with the *Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960* and *Local Government Act 1972*, a council meeting must be open to the public and the press, and they may only be excluded by manner of a council resolution, that states publicity would prejudice the public interest by reasons of the confidential nature of the business or some other reasons stated in the respective resolution arising out of the business to be transacted.

After discussions, it was then moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that;

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed.



20.254 VICTORY HALL UPDATE

Members were reminded a revised lease was relayed to LMVHF on 9th October 2020, and a virtual meeting was held on 14th October 2020. Members were further reminded that at the Management committee meeting held on 28th October 2020 and the council meeting held on 10th December 2020, it was resolved that the 'Final schedule of dilapidations/wants of repair' report and the Electrical installation condition report, would be conveyed to the LMVHF and the Chigwell Member's Club.

Members were advised that on 20th January 2021, a meeting was held with an advisor from the Rural Community Council for Essex (RCCE), to garner further advice on these matters and at the Management committee meeting held on 21st January 2021, it was resolved that access to the building would be restricted, whilst essential repairs and renovations, necessary for a vacant property would be undertaken and the agreed actions would be pursued.

Members **RECEIVED** a confidential update, from the Chairman, on these matters. After full and in-depth discussions, it was then moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The recommendations of the selected service provider would be **APPROVED**.
- The selected service provider and the associated documentation which defined the respective services would be **APPROVED**.

20.255 EFDC MONITORING OFFICER CORRESPONDENCE

Members were advised that this council has received correspondence from the Shared Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer, at Epping Forest District Council, as shown at the respective confidential appendix. This correspondence pertains to a complaint from a member of the public, which refers to an alleged breach of the Nolan principles, by a serving Member of staff.

After discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The council would not comment and no further action would be taken.

20.256 EFDC MONITORING OFFICER INVESTIGATION

Members were advised that this council has received correspondence from the Shared Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer, at EFDC, as shown at the respective confidential appendix. This correspondence pertains to an investigation into a complaint from a member of staff, against a serving Councillor.

After discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The council would not comment and no further action would be taken.



20.257 EFDC MONITORING OFFICER CORRESPONDENCE

Members were advised that this council has received correspondence from the Shared Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer, at EFDC, as shown at the respective confidential appendix. This correspondence pertains to a complaint from a member of the public, against a serving Councillor.

After discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The council would not comment and no further action would be taken.

The meeting concluded at 10.50pm.

Signed

Chairman

Date