

## MINUTES

**Council Meeting:** ANNUAL COUNCIL **Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Time:** 6.00pm

**Hosted From:** VICTORY HALL, HAINAULT ROAD, CHIGWELL

---

**PRESENT: Councillors (11)**

Councillors; Celina Jefcoate (Chairperson), Naveed Akhtar, Pranav Bhanot, Rashni Chahal Holden (Vice-Chairperson), Elliot Costa, Rochelle Hodds, Lisa Morgan Skingsley, Renu Phull, Saqlain Syed Raza, Faiza Rizvi and Mona Sehmi.

**Officers (1)**

Anthony Belgrave – Clerk to the Council.

**Also in Attendance**

There were members of the public in attendance.

### 21.00 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.

### 21.01 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Hodds **PROPOSED**, and Councillor Bhanot **SECONDED**, Councillor Jefcoate. As there were no other nominations, Councillor Jefcoate was **ELECTED** as Chairperson of Chigwell Parish Council for the current Municipal Year and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairperson was duly executed at the meeting.

### 21.02 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson **PROPOSED**, and Councillor Morgan Skingsley **SECONDED**, Councillor Chahal Holden. As there were no other nominations, Councillor Chahal Holden was **ELECTED** as Vice-Chairperson of Chigwell Parish Council for the current Municipal Year and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Vice-Chairperson was duly executed at the meeting.

### 21.03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (0)

Members **NOTED** that no apologies for absence had been received.

### 21.04 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

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

## MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### 21.05 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021 were **CONFIRMED**.

### 21.06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members **NOTED** that there were no Declarations of Interest.

### 21.07 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

The following written question was **RECEIVED** from a member of the public;

**Q.** Would the Parish Councillors please consider allowing members of the public to ask questions at parish council meetings and reverse the ban that is currently in place.

**A.** The Chairperson stated that the Council encouraged public participation and the Terms of Reference detailed which committees the public could address. The public participation policy would most certainly be formalised, if required at the next council meeting. She further suggested that this council is ultimately dependent on the support of residents, and that policy should reflect this.

### 21.08 COMMUNICATIONS

No communications had been received.

### 21.09 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT

Members **NOTED** the documents that had been received and/or deposited with the Clerk to the Council since 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

### 21.10 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

#### a) List of Payments/Incomes/Account Balances

Members were advised that the received report of the Interim Responsible Financial Officer was drafted using the Scribe software systems, as opposed to the Rialtas software systems, which has been used previously.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The list of payments signed up to 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021 be **APPROVED**, and that the income received and the balances of the Council's Bank Accounts at that date be **NOTED**.

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

The Chairperson **PROPOSED**, and Vice-Chairperson **SECONDED**, that the reconciliation of the Parish Council Bank Accounts with the Finance Accounts will be checked, confirmed, and signed accordingly.

## MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

c) **Confirmation of Staff Salary Payments** 

Members were advised that the Chairperson has checked, confirmed and accordingly signed the relevant documents.

d) **Governance and Accountability – Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control.** 

Members were advised that this agenda item is in preparation for the completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement, for the year ended 2020/21 scheduled for the Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

This matter was referred to the Finance and Governance Committee for their review and update. It will return to Full Council for final approval within 3 months.

### 21.11 COMMITTEES

The Chairperson suggested that the business of the Management Committee may be better divided between the Community Assets Committee and a Community Services Committee. She further proposed that the Finance Committee be retitled the Finance and Governance Committee.

After further discussions, the Council's Committees and working group and membership of those was **DETERMINED** as follows:

- (a) Planning Committee - **RESOLVED** that this Committee's membership would continue to comprise all Members.
- (b) Community Assets Committee - **RESOLVED** that this Committee's membership would comprise five Members. (*Councillors: Akhtar, Hodds, Jefcoate, Morgan Skingsley and Phull*) plus members of the public per the Terms of Reference
- (c) Community Services Committee - **RESOLVED** that this Committee's membership would comprise five Members. (*Councillors: Bhanot, Phull, Raza, Rizvi and Sehmi*) plus members of the public per the Terms of Reference
- (d) Finance and Governance Committee - **RESOLVED** that this Committee's membership would comprise five Members. (*Councillors: Chahal Holden, Costa, Jefcoate, Raza and Rizvi*)
- (e) Personnel Committee - **RESOLVED** that this Committee's membership would comprise five Members. (*Councillors: Chahal Holden, Costa, Hodds, Morgan Skingsley and Rizvi*)
- (f) Climate Emergency Working Group - **RESOLVED** that this Committee's membership would comprise five Members. (*Councillors: Akhtar, Hodds and Morgan Skingsley*) plus members of the public

Members are advised that these committees have duly delegated authority, accordingly, the decisions of these committees would be reported to council for information rather than for ratification, unless this decision would result in an expenditure over that listed in their Terms of Reference. Any decision that will result in an expenditure of over the amount detailed in the Terms of Reference will require ratification from the Council, prior to implementation.

Members were advised that the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the council are both ex-officio members of all Committees and, therefore, may stand-in if necessary, to ensure that the committee meetings are deemed quorate.

## MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### 21.12 COMMITTEES – Terms of reference review.

Members **CONSIDERED** and **APPROVED** the Terms of Reference documents for the above Committees.

### 21.13 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members were asked to **DETERMINE** the Council's representatives the listed outside bodies.

Outside Body	Council's Representative During 2020/2021
Epping Forest Country-Care Liaison Group	Formerly Councillor Barry Scrutton (Chairman)
Victory Hall Foundation	Councillor Rochelle Hodds
Chigwell United Charities Trust	Formerly Councillor Barry Scrutton
Epping Forest District Council: Standards Committee	Councillor Deborah Barlow
EFDC Local Councils' Liaison Committee	The Clerk and the Chairperson are automatically Members of this Committee. The Vice Chairperson is now also a Member.

The Chairperson suggested that the purpose and function of these external agencies should be explained to Members, prior to any decisions being made by the council. After discussion,

- The Clerk will provide a written summary of the function of each committee to Councillors and the matter be brought forward to the next Full Council meeting

### 21.14 REVIEW OF COUNCIL & STAFF SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members were advised that this council is presently subscribed to National/Essex Association of Local Councils (NALC/EALC), Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE), Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), Clerks and Councils Direct, Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) and the National Allotment Association.

Members **REVIEWED** the council and staff subscriptions; it was **RESOLVED** that:

- The subscriptions as shown at **Appendix 6**, would be **APPROVED**.

### 21.15 CODE OF MEMBER CONDUCT

The Chairperson reminded Members of the importance of the Code of Member Conduct and the requirement of Councillors to abide by the regulations therein. After further discussion, it was moved by the Chairperson and **RESOLVED** that:

- The Code of Members Conduct would be **APPROVED** and **ADOPTED**.

### 21.16 INVENTORY OF LAND AND ASSETS REVIEW

This matter was referred to the Community Assets Committee for their review and update. It will return to Full Council for final approval within 3 months.

## MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### 21.17 STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW

Members were advised that draft Standing Orders (2021) and Financial Regulations (2021) are the most recent publications provided by the NALC.

Members **CONSIDERED** these documents as shown at the respective appendices.

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

- The Standing Orders (2021) and Financial Regulations (2021) would be **APPROVED** and **ADOPTED**.

### 21.18 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

Members were advised, before exercising the General Power of Competence, the Parish Council must resolve to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria set out in the Parish Council's (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012/965 and the council qualifies as an eligible Parish Council. This statutory power allows an eligible council to do anything subject to statutory prohibitions, restrictions, and limitations. Members were further advised that the council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution was made and expires on the day before the Annual Meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.

Members **NOTED** the conditions of eligibility as detailed in the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, and that the Clerk has completed the prerequisite training and received the certificate of qualification, namely the 'Certificate in Local Council Administration - CilCA.'

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

- It be **CONFIRMED** that the statutory conditions to exercise the General Power of Competence have been achieved by this council.

### 21.19 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE REVIEW

Members were advised that the council has a Complaints Procedure, which is based on guidance and best practice from the National Association for Local Councils (NALC).

This matter was referred to the Finance and Governance Committee for their review and update. It will return to Full Council for final approval within 3 months.

### 21.20 DATA PROTECTION POLICY REVIEW

Members were advised that this document was approved at the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and that this council must assure the compliance with the statutory requirements of Data Protection legislation.

This matter was referred to the Finance and Governance Committee for their review and update. It will return to Full Council for final approval within 3 months.

## MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### 21.21 MEDIA POLICY REVIEW

Members were advised, at the meeting of the now Communications committee, held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 a Media policy was adopted. This matter was referred to the Community Services Committee for their review and update. It will return to Full Council for final approval within 3 months.

### 21.22 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST- Internal Review Procedure

Members were advised that at the council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2020, it was resolved to adopt a Freedom of Information Request: Internal Review Policy.

The Freedom of Information Policy was referred to the Finance and Governance Committee for their review and update. It will return to Full Council for final approval within 3 months.

### 21.23 MEMBERS REPORTS

Members *NOTED* that there were no reports.

### 21.24 HIGHWAY REPORTS

Members *NOTED* that there were no Highway reports.

### 21.25 REPORT OF THE CLERK

The Clerk reported that;

- He will be on Annual leave from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021, returning to work on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021.
- Correspondence, dated 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021, has been received from the Chairman of the Limes Farm Residents Association; Mr Rupert Nelson, advising that he has resigned from this position.
- He attended an online training course entitled Cemetery Management & Compliance, on 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021, hosted by the Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management.
- A number of training opportunities have been made available by the Epping Forest District Council's Councillor Development Programme 2021/22, the respective prospectus is included in the Councillor Introductory Pack, and has also been circulate to all Members.
- He will be engaged in volunteering duties in support of the Epping Forest Foodbank, on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

### 21.26 REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON

Members *NOTED* that there was no report from the Chairperson.

## MINUTES

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### 21.27 MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD TO THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Representation on outside bodies

### 21.28 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 moved by the Chairperson and **RESOLVED** that;

- The public and the press would not be excluded from the meeting, whilst the matter of the '*External Auditor Correspondence*' was considered by the council.
- The public and the press would be excluded from the meeting, the council believing that the correspondence regarding the Victory Hall Deed of Surrender received from the solicitor were received in confidence and should not be considered by the council in a public forum.

### 21.29 EXTERNAL AUDITOR CORRESPONDENCE

Members were advised correspondence dated 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020 was received by the External Auditor and the former Chairman; Councillor Pranav Bhanot, following a received query. Following correspondence received by the Clerk, from the External Auditor, dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021, response has been drafted by the previous RFO and the Clerk, for Member's consideration.

Members **CONSIDERED** the received query and the draft response, as shown at the respective appendices.

After discussions, it was moved by the Vice Chairperson and **RESOLVED** that;

- The drafted response be **APPROVED** and sent to the External Auditor on behalf of this council.

**MINUTES**

*Meeting:* ANNUAL COUNCIL

*Date:* 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**21.30 VICTORY HALL/CHIGWELL MEMBER'S CLUB**

At the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021, it was resolved that the consultant solicitor would be instructed to pursue a Deed of Surrender on behalf of this council.

Members **CONSIDERED** the correspondence and associated documentation received from the solicitor, in pursuance of the actions, agreed by the previous council.

It was moved by the Chairperson and **RESOLVED** that:

- The solicitor be instructed to agree with the Lewis Memorial & Victory Hall Foundation a Deed of Surrender that would excuse both parties of all liabilities which may be associated with the lease.

*Signed* .....

**Chairperson**

*Date* .....