



**MINUTES**

**Meeting:** COUNCIL

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019

**Time:** 8.00PM

**Venue:** COUNCIL OFFICES, HAINAULT ROAD, CHIGWELL

**PRESENT: Councillors (8)**

Councillors Darshan Singh Sunger (Chairman), Naveed Akhtar, Richard Alvin (Vice-Chairman), Deborah Barlow, Kewal Chana, John Knapman, Alan Lion, and Barry Scrutton.

**Officers (1)**

Mark Hembury – Acting Clerk to the Council.

**Also in Attendance (7)**

There were seven members of the public in attendance.

**18.169 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (3)**

**NOTED** that apologies had been received from Councillors Roger Farthing, Rochelle Hodds and Brian Sandler.

**18.170 OTHER ABSENCES (0)**

There were no other absences

**18.171 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 were confirmed.

**18.172 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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



### 18.173 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members were advised that eight questions have been received from members of the public. The questions are listed as follows;

- Q. According to data published by CPC a contract with the value of £13313.59 plus VAT was entered into with Registered Company No. 06830476 (Fresh-Air Fitness Ltd) on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The VAT was Reclaimed. Records at Companies House show company no. 06830476 (Fresh-Air Fitness Ltd) has been dormant since its incorporation in 2009 and has never traded. Please confirm what due diligence was carried out by CPC prior to the payment being made to registered company no. 06830476 and VAT being reclaimed.
  - A. In response, the Acting Clerk stated that as the members of staff who dealt with this purchase no longer work for the Parish council, he was unable to answer the first part of the question. Regarding the second part, enquiries with Companies House reveal that Fresh-Air Fitness was trading during the time of the purchase and was not a dormant company.
- Q. In relation to the recent news as reported in the Epping Forest Guardian regarding the planning application of Chigwell Primary School: Is a member of the council able to give an update on the school refurbishment in light of the recent event, future planning arrangements and the status of the Chigwell Bus Service?
  - A. In response, Councillor Knapman stated that whilst there had been some delays to the redevelopment, the applicant was very much expected to get on with the work in the near future. Whilst the bus service will rely on the sec. 106 payments that are due as soon as work starts, should these not be immediately forthcoming, there are reserves which will allow the bus to run for a further 12 months. It should be appreciated that the bus service is very much experimental, and that if at some future stage the service ended, the buses would be given to Epping Forest Community Transport.

The next five questions were asked in one batch, as the subject matter was similar.

- Q. This Council has been informed of work which Transport for London is undertaking in Grange Hill Ward, which will continue daily for several years and for which TFL is changing the road access, use and infrastructure indefinitely. It has become apparent that the work is going to cause serious damage to the value and structural stability of homes and severe detriment to the wellbeing and safety of residents. Meanwhile there is an alternative course of action available to TFL which would considerably mitigate the harm to residents, homes the environment and the community.



What is this Council doing to ensure members understand the issues in this matter; to mitigate the damage to homes and residents' wellbeing; to prevent law-breaking by TFL (including breaches of human rights and to challenge the TFL actions which will render homes on The Chase and Lechmere Avenue inaccessible to emergency services, utility services and workmen?

- Q. TFL are to remove approximately 60,000 tonnes of earth from their works site in Chigwell and replace it with a substance they call EM16 from a site in Rickmansworth. EM16 will contain dirt and small gravel, but there has been no indication of the toxicity of EM16. How does council feel about TFL importing thousands of tonnes of EM16 when they could replace the soil, indigenous to the area with what has been taken out?
- Q. Within the Freedom of Information Act received by residents from TFL two surveys were carried out regarding the possible risk of WW1 and WW2 bombs being uncovered when work commences to extract thousands of tonnes of earth from their work site in Chigwell. The first survey considers there to be a 'medium risk of such bombs being found' whereas the second survey states that there is only a 'minimum risk of bombs being found'. What is the council going to do a) to inform residents that there is such a risk, which could mean disruption and evacuation of the area b) to ascertain exactly what the risk level is and why the change in levels without any explanation from TFL?
- Q. At a meeting with TFL, residents were told that the trees being removed from the embankment within the Chigwell area of railway track would be assessed on a 'tree by tree' basis. When the TFL tree surgeon was questioned by residents, he stated 'all trees were to be cut down except for a large oak by the footpath. What will the councillors be doing to a) ascertain exactly why residents are given contradictory information and b) ascertain exactly what trees will be left intact?
- Q. Why do CPC insist on not informing residents about significant works that TFL are carrying out at their site in Chigwell, when it affects over 200 residencies and hundreds of families who will be affected either by the work itself or by noise, pollution, parking restrictions and traffic disruptions on The Chase, Lechmere Avenue, Hycliffe Gardens, Dacre Gardens, Broadhurst Gardens and Fountain Avenue?
- A. In response, the Chairman stated that he understood the situation residents found themselves in and had sympathy for them. Councillor Sunger also informed residents that two of their Ward Councillors, Councillors Lion and Barlow were actively supporting the residents with issues related to TFL. It was stated that TFL have significant powers to act, but regarding the trees mentioned, the District tree officer would be contacted to ascertain if there were any protected trees in the area concerned. It was also stated that the website area that TFL had discussed never came into being.



Councillor Sunger stated that regarding the issues raised in the questions, the council would write to TFL putting the points raised by the residents and asking for their comments.

- Q. Please advise of the status of the suggestion to install electric charging points in Hainault Road car park.
- A. Councillor Alvin responded and stated that there was a possible supplier: Polar and discussions were on-going.

#### 18.174 COMMUNICATIONS

*NOTED* that no communications had been received.

#### 18.175 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT

*NOTED* the documents that had been received and/or deposited with the Clerk to the Council since 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

#### 18.176 STREET LIGHTING

Following the circulation from EFDC regarding re-instating night time street lighting, Councillor Sunger stated that he had asked for a response to be sent back to confirm Chigwell Parish Council were in principle, and subject to the decision of this Council meeting, in favour of turning the lights back on. During the discussion that then took place, Councillor Knapman stated he would want to check the cost of the lights as given by the District Council as the total appeared on the high side. He also wanted to confirm that we would not be charged for a six-hour period of lighting, when in fact we only had a four-hour period when the lights were off, unlike other areas. Councillor Lion wanted confirmation that those areas that agreed to switch the lights on, would not end up paying extra because of those areas that did not want to turn the lights on. Councillor Knapman stated that if the cost was as quoted, then the parish council had several options at its disposal that would allow the money to be found, without increasing the precept to fully fund the extra cost. The timescales for the lights being turned on were not clear and further clarification would be needed.

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

- This information be *NOTED*.
- Further clarification of the costs involved, and the timescales would be requested from Essex County Council and Epping Forest District Council.



## 18.177 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

### a) List of Cheques

It was moved by the Vice-Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

the list of cheques signed up to 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 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 Council Bank Accounts with the Accounts Package

Councillor Alvin proposed and Councillor Scrutton seconded, that the reconciliation of the Parish Council Bank Accounts with the Finance Accounts has been checked, confirmed and signed accordingly.

### c) Finance – Formal Request for Precept 2019/2020

Members were reminded that at the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 this council approved the budget and Precept for the sum of £455,761.00 (four hundred, fifty-five thousand, seven hundred and sixty-one pounds) and £290,801.00 (two hundred, ninety thousand, eight hundred and one pounds), respectively.

The Responsible Financial Officer advise members on that an error has been made in the figure for the precept presented to the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The agreed figure: £290,801.00 is an increase of 1.9% on the precept for the previous year, not 0% increase as was intended. The error was due to the Council Tax Support Grant no longer being received this year, the shortfall in income mistakenly being made up by the increased contribution for the Precept. After discussion concerning the potential options for dealing with this error, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The acceptance of the Precept for 2019/2020 of £290,801.00 be put to the recorded vote.

The result was as follows:

Councillors in favour: Naveed Akhtar, Richard Alvin, Kewal Chana, John Knapman and Darshan Singh Sunger.

Councillors opposed: Barry Scrutton.

Councillors abstention: Deborah Barlow and Alan Lion.

After the result of this recorded vote was announced by the Acting Clerk, as five in favour and one opposed, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- The Precept for the financial year 2019/2020 would be £290,801.00



### 18.178 EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN HEARING SESSIONS

Members were advised by the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee, that in accordance with regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Epping Forest District Council submitted the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018 for independent examination. An independent inspector has now been appointed to undertake this examination and determine whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) and to prepare a report on behalf of the district council to recommend whether the EFDC Local Plan should be adopted. As part of this process a 'Provisional Hearing Programme' has been scheduled, to allow representations to be heard, these sessions will take place over a period of 6 weeks in 2019. Councillor Lion advised members that he wished to declare an interest in this matter because of his role as a District Councillor serving on the Local Plan Cabinet Committee.

After a full and in-depth discussion took place, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.

### 18.179 TRANSFER OF MAINTENANCE OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH CEMETERY

The Acting Clerk advised members that a notice of intention to transfer maintenance responsibility of St. Mary's Church, graveyard has been received by the Parish Council and an appropriate response is now required.

After discussions and **CONSIDERATION** of the relevant documents, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The responsibility for the maintenance of St. Mary's Church graveyard will be passed to Epping Forest District Council.

### 18.180 TFL UPDATE CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

Councillor Lion advised members that there was nothing further to report, on this subject.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.



### 18.181 CHIGWELL LIBRARY – PROPOSED CLOSURE

Members were advised that Essex County Council has circulated documents addressed to Parish Councils that may consider developing proposals to administer a community library service. After discussions and the **CONSIDERATION** of these documents, members acknowledged the importance of Chigwell Library and the related services to residents. Councillor Knapman suggested that rather than investigating the possibility of maintaining a library as outlined in the appendix, this Parish Council should convey their opposition to the proposed closure of the library by Essex County Council.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The Parish Council would strongly object to the proposed closure of the library.
- Appropriate Correspondence would be drafted and dispatched to the County Councillor for Chigwell and Loughton Broadway.

### 18.182 CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

Members **NOTED** there were no consultation documents.

### 18.183 MEMBERS' REPORTS

There were no member's reports.

### 18.184 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

#### a) Street Electrical Charging Stations

Councillor Lion updated members on the problem of on-street electrical charging points and the progress of a business case with Essex County Council.

#### b) Parking Restrictions

Councillor Lion advised members that several double yellow lines require maintenance within Grange Hill Ward.

#### c) Pot-holes

Councillor Barlow stated that the existence of pot-holes was still a concern in the area.

#### d) Blocked drains and gullies

Councillor Scrutton stated that the drains and gullies on the High road have suffered extensive blockages and suggested that the Essex Fire authority could be contacted to rectify this situation.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.



**18.185 REPORT OF THE CLERK**

There was nothing to report.

**18.186 REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN**

There was nothing to report.

**18.187 MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD TO THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

- Councillor Lion requested that an update on the Community Bus Service and the respective contract agreement be included on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Councillor Scrutton requested that an update on the Victory Hall be provided at the next meeting.

**18.188 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

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.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Signed .....

**Chairman**

Date .....