



MINUTES

Meeting: COUNCIL

Date: 6th February 2019

Time: 8.00PM

Venue: COUNCIL OFFICES, HAINAULT ROAD, CHIGWELL

PRESENT: Councillors (7)

Councillors: Richard Alvin (Vice-Chairman), Naveed Akhtar, Deborah Barlow, Rochelle Hodds, John Knapman, Alan Lion and Brian Sandler.

Officers (1)

Anthony-Louis Belgrave – Clerk to the Council.

Also in Attendance (3)

There were three members of the public in attendance.

18.189 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (4)

NOTED that apologies had been received from Councillors: Kewal Chana, Roger Farthing, Barry Scrutton and Darshan Singh Sunger.

18.190 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

There were no other absences

18.191 MINUTES

Councillor Lion questioned the wording of minute **18.178**. He advised members that an interest was declared because he is a District Councillor serving on the Cabinet Committee and not the Local Plan Cabinet Committee as detailed in the minutes of the meeting held on 9th January.

Councillor Lion stated he had requested the Income and Expenditure reporting be included at the next meeting, however this matter appears to have been overlooked.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.
- Income and Expenditure reporting would be considered by the Finance and Performance committee at their meeting and an accordant recommendation would subsequently be made to the Parish Council.
- The Clerk would re-draft the minutes which would then be confirmed at the next council meeting on 6th March 2019.

18.192 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST



NOTED that there were no Declarations of Interest.

18.193 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Clerk advised Members that one question had been received from a member of the public. The question is listed as follows;

- Q. When Planning permission was first granted to build the Limes Farm estate during the 1960's, there was meant to be a second vehicular access onto Manor road. I understand this was stopped, due to a covenant upon the green land between the Limes Avenue and Manor Road, restricting new accesses onto Manor Road.

Can Chigwell Parish council provide evidence of this restriction or covenant, or put me in touch with the landowner, previous landowner or resident, who may provide further details?

- A. In response, The Vice-Chairman advised that further details on this matter should be sort from the appropriate authorities at Epping Forest District Council. Councillor Knapman also stated that to his knowledge there is a covenant determining the usage of this area of land and he suggested a 'Freedom of Information' request be submitted directly to EFDC to get further details. Councillor Lion stated that he understood a proposal for a second access was resisted by Essex Police and later rejected, primarily for security reasons.

18.194 COMMUNICATIONS

NOTED that no communications had been received.

18.195 DOCUMENTS ON DEPOSIT

NOTED the documents that had been received and/or deposited with the Clerk to the Council since 9th January 2019.

18.196 REPORT OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

a) List of Cheques

Councillor Lion enquired as to the reason for the noticeable variation in the total salaries for each month. In response, the Clerk advised members that this was because of the accordant variations of staff overtime incurred and staff mileage expenditure. After further discussions, it was moved by the Vice-Chairman and *RESOLVED* that:

the list of cheques signed up to 24th January 2019 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 Hodds seconded, that the reconciliation of the Parish Council Bank Accounts with the Finance Accounts has been checked, confirmed and signed accordingly.

c) **Amendment of Financial Regulations 2014: Regulation 5.2 and 5.4**

Members were advised that whilst the authorisation of cheques at the monthly council meetings is compliant with the Financial Regulations, the current practice of authorising cheques at the planning meetings does not conform with the adopted policy. The reason is that the existing Financial Regulations require that the authorisation of payments must be detailed on the agenda for that meeting.

The Clerk further advised members that to ensure compliance and to deal with invoices in a timely manner, this council must consider the proposed amendments to the existing Financial Regulations 2014, as described in the respective appendix. Members then **CONSIDERED** the proposed amendments as detailed in the appendix and after further discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- Financial regulations 5.2 and 5.4 would be amended as follows:

*5.2 The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council [or **Planning** committee]. The council / committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council [or **Planning** committee]. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.*

*5.4 The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council [or **Planning** Committee] meeting.*

d) **Alteration to existing Parish Council banking arrangements**

Members were reminded that this council maintains a current account with a cheque-book facility. This service is required for the regular and punctual payment of received invoices. Members were advised that this arrangement is dependant on the efficiency of the postal services and over the previous two months, two postal bags went missing. Consequently, the contents did not arrive



at the intended destination, which included sixteen cheques. The Clerk further suggested that the council change the present arrangement to allow the processing of electronic payments, rather than the issue of cheques, whilst still preserving the existing security arrangements against potential fraud.

Members then **CONSIDERED** the proposal to alter the banking arrangements, as detailed in the appendix and after further discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The proposal to alter the banking arrangements, to allow the processing of electronic payments, whilst still preserving the existing security arrangements be **APPROVED**.

18.197 **PLAY IN THE PARK ACTIVITY PROGRAMME**

Members were advised that the Parish Council has been asked to make a monetary contribution towards the cost of delivering the Epping Forest District Council – Play in the Park – Activity Programme. The Clerk stated that he has discussed this matter with the EFDC Community Engagement Officer, who agreed to provide further details about this project which were available in the appendix. Members then **CONSIDERED** this information and the respective correspondence received from the Community Engagement Officer. After a full and in-depth discussion, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- A monetary contribution of £340.00 be **APPROVED**, this will cover the operational costs of four ‘Play in the Park’ activity sessions: Monday 5th August 1.30pm - 3.30pm, Friday 9th August 10am – 12pm, Monday 19th August 1.30 – 3.30pm, Friday 23rd August 10am – 12pm.

18.198 **COMMUNITY BUS SERVICE – Community Transport Partnership Agreement**

Members were reminded that at the meeting held on 2nd August 2018 this council ratified the decision made by the Community Bus Service Management Committee to enter into a partnership agreement with Epping Forest Community Transport. This agreement permits EFCT to administer the Community Bus Service on behalf of the Parish Council. In compliance with this arrangement the Parish Council provided the monetary funding of £97,500 towards the project, for a period of 12 months, from an agreed date: 31st August 2018. This payment is to be made in two equal instalments of £48,750. The first of which was paid on 31st August 2018 and the second to be paid on 28th February 2019. The Vice-Chairman reminded members the reason this matter appears on the agenda is due to concerns expressed at the previous meeting about the S106 monetary contributions towards the Community Bus Service. Councillor Knapman advised members that he has discussed the proposed development of the Chigwell Primary School and the entwined S106 agreement, with the Assistant Director of Development Management at EFDC. Further, he



intends to pursue written confirmation of the verbal assurances given during these discussions.

Councillor Lion advised members that he has examined figures relating to the usage of the service, he then expressed concerns that the service was not being utilised to its full capacity. In response, the Vice-Chairman suggested that these figures may not be an accurate reflection of the present situation, because a more detailed Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is forthcoming and the statistics quoted by Councillor Lion have been superseded by more current data.

Councillor Lion suggested that the figures should be presented to the council for consideration. Councillor Alvin advised members that future marketing schemes will be pursued to promote the Community Bus Service, as he acknowledged this aspect of the project was quite inadequate, further the Community Bus Users Group have implemented certain minor alterations to the routes and time-table to improve the service. Councillor Lion responded that the figures should still be presented to the council and he questioned whether the service had done anything to diminish traffic levels in Chigwell.

Councillor Knapman acknowledged that the bus service is in desperate need of an appropriate marketing scheme as the previous attempts were wholly inadequate. He continued, the respective committee must promote this transport scheme as being beneficial to the entire community. Further consideration should also be given to improving the effectiveness, efficiency and flexibility of the service during off-peak periods. He concluded that Councillor Lion's point is valid, in that further promotion of the service must be pursued and the data concerning usage should be examined, to properly inform any future marketing scheme. In conclusion, the Vice-Chairman stated that in discussions with the Manager at Epping Forest Community Transport (EFCT) he has been advised them that KPI data should be available for consideration in a timely manner.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.

18.199 STANDING ORDERS

The Clerk advised members that a review of the Parish Council's Standing Orders 2017 has been undertaken, consequentially several updates have been deemed necessary. The Clerk further advised members that whilst this document is based on the model published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), any amendments may only be engaged by Council resolution. Members then **CONSIDERED** the proposed amendments as shown in the appendix. After further discussions, it was moved by the Chairman and **RESOLVED** that:

- This information be **NOTED**.
- The amended Standing Orders be **APPROVED** for adoption by the Parish Council and the website be accordingly updated.



18.200 VICTORY HALL UPDATE

Members were reminded that an internal and external inspection of Victory Hall was undertaken at the request of the council by a RICS surveyor and Electrical specialist. The resultant dilapidations report and a supplementary electrical installation condition report was examined by members at the meeting held on 13th December 2018 and the former resolution to not renew the lease and to assume all administrative responsibilities for the Victory Hall was confirmed. The Vice-Chairman stated that considering the various responsibilities which are to be assumed by the Parish Council, it would be sensible to establish a Victory Hall Management Committee.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.
- A committee in support of Victory Hall would be established, the members of this committee will be Councillors: Alvin, Barlow, Hodds, Lion and one other.

18.201 MEMBERS' REPORTS

a) Environment Committee

Councillor Sandler advised members that having recently visited the cemetery, he has observed the continuing renovation and replacement of the pathways within the memorial section. This project is going well, and the selected provider has done an excellent job thus far. The predicted income from the cemetery has already exceeded budgetary forecasts. He further advised members that there remains the possibility a Holocaust memorial could be erected in Chigwell, as discussions with the Epping Forest Memorial Working Group and other relevant parties are on-going. It is intended to plant an Evergreen hedge on the land behind the car-park and along the metallic fencing, which would obscure the buildings from view, enhance security and beautify the site from Courtland Drive. The Rough Terrain Vehicle (RTV) has suffered a breakdown and is presently being repaired, consideration may have to be given to replacing the asset in due course. Lastly, members were advised that the Brook Parade CCTV system has now been replaced, is fully operational and has already proved effective in recording criminal activity as two recent events have shown, an incident of car-theft and a shop burglary were recorded during the previous week.

b) Communications Committee

Councillor Barlow advised members that at the previous meeting of this committee, members agreed to adopt a Media Policy, which would define the roles and responsibilities of members and staff when engaging with various media organisations. Further, a Newsletter Advertising Policy was also drafted by the Clerk and has now been adopted. This policy will define the approach taken when accepting clients wishing to advertise in this publication and



standardise the content of adverts. These policies will be emailed to all members for their information, in due course.

Lastly, Councillor Barlow advised members that all those who serve as Chairman of committees will be expected to draft a written article detailing the activities, ambitions and achievements of their respective committees, to be published in the May edition of the newsletter.

c) Central Line Renovation Project

Councillor Lion advised members that he recently attended a public meeting, hosted by Transport for London (TfL), concerning the ongoing Central Line renovation project. This meeting was exceedingly acrimonious and contentious, a heated exchange between the attending public and representations of TfL occurred. At this meeting alternative access points to the site were discussed and the district council have now appointed a single point of contact and uploaded relevant information onto their website. Councillor Knapman stated that too much time and resources have been expended on this matter, since this council has no statutory power to determine the manner TfL conducts business and especially when one considers this council was never consulted on this project in the first place. In response, Councillor Lion stated he believes residents have requested the support of the council, therefore we are obligated to oblige them. Councillor Knapman countered by stating that such action created an impression the Parish Council could influence the modus operandi of TfL, which it cannot.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.

18.202 HIGHWAYS ISSUES

a) Vicarage Lane

Councillor Lion advised members he has discussed with County Councillor Mohindra the observed increase in vehicular collisions and near-misses on Vicarage Lane. It appears this dangerous situation has been further exasperated by the re-occurrent rupture of sub-surface water mains, which creates ‘black-ice.’ He has been advised that the relevant authorities are intending to clear the drainage system at Vicarage Lane to reduce the quantity of surface water, thereby preventing the build-up of ice on the roads.

b) Manor Road Foot-path

Councillor Lion advised members that the footpath connecting the Bowls to Manor Road has become quite narrow due to uncultivated vegetation and consequentially is dangerous.

c) County Councillor’s Presentation



The Clerk advised members that the County Councillor for Chigwell and Loughton Broadway: Councillor Gagan Mohindra will be attending the next council meeting on 6th March 2019.

At this meeting a short presentation will be given, followed by a public Q&A's.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.
- A letter will be drafted, addressed to the Thames Water, concerning the dangerous situation on Vicarage Lane, caused by ruptured water mains.
- The overgrowth on the 'Manor Road' foot-path would be reported to the relevant authorities.

18.203 REPORT OF THE CLERK

The Clerk reported that;

- A meeting of the Finance & Performance Committee has been scheduled for Wednesday 13th February 2019, 11am.
- He will be attending a meeting of the Epping Forest Branch of the Essex Association of Local Councils on Tuesday 19th February 2019, 7.45pm.
- The Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex will be attending the council meeting on 6th March 2019. There will be a ten-minute presentation, followed by a public Q&A session.
- Members are advised that a response has been received from the TfL Community Partnership Specialist, to the public questions received at the last council meeting, concerning the Central Line renovation project. This correspondence has now been uploaded on to the Parish Council website.
- The Parish Councils' request for further clarification concerning the determination of the costings involved to extend the operation of street lighting have remained unanswered. The original enquiry was sent on 16th January 2019. This enquiry has now been re-submitted as a 'Freedom of Information' request.
- 'Points of Light' a (National Association of Local Councils) NALC publication: which contains a collection of case studies highlighting the work that local (Parish & Town) councils are undertaking to support local communities. These case studies have been compiled to promote good practice and raise awareness of the diverse range of services local councils are facilitating. The 2019 edition features an article about the Chigwell Parish Council's Community Bus Service, which members may find interesting and informative.

18.204 REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN



There was nothing to report.

18.205 MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD TO THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

- Finance & Performance Committee recommendations pertaining to the Budget reconciliations.

18.206 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.

18.207 VICTORY HALL & LEASE AGREEMENT

Members were reminded that this council examined the internal, external dilapidation report and the electrical installation condition report at a previous meeting. At this meeting it was again agreed to not renew the lease and assume administrative responsibilities for the Victory Hall. The Vice Chairman expressed concerns that whilst the legal representation and expertise provided by the solicitor has proved adequate, a more immediate service would be required if the Parish Council intends to achieve its ambitions in a timely manner and prior to the conclusion of the present lease in April 2019. The Clerk advised members that the council is still awaiting the legal advice concerning the land owned by Essex county Council and the Victory Hall Lease agreement. Further, the Clerk stated that several implications should be considered in the event this council are to assume the responsibilities of administering Victory Hall and the various activities which take place there, namely Staffing implications, management of bookings/timetables, health and safety, insurance and security of the site.

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

- This information be **NOTED**.
- Initial investigations would be conducted towards engaging alternative legal representation.
- A Victory Hall Committee would be established.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signed



Chairman

Date