

1 Hardcore Material at Station Green

A local resident has expressed interest in taking the hardcore material and has requested to collect it. If this does not happen within a reasonable time, we will make other arrangements to dispose of it.

2. Cemetery Complaints

We have received some complaints about the cemetery and are currently working through the proper channels to resolve them.

3. Recruitment Updates

- *Open Spaces and Cemetery Operative:* We have made an appointment subject to satisfactory references and have identified a backup candidate just in case.
- *Caretaker Position:* This role is now being advertised. We have switched to an online application system to make things quicker and more transparent. CVs are not accepted
- *Clerk Recruitment:* The recruitment pack is being reviewed by HR. We are finalising advertising and recruitment plans as the EALC may not be the best option due to potential impartiality concerns relating to Chigwell Parish Council.

4. Employment Matters

- All job descriptions have been reviewed, redrafted and are being agreed with staff.
- New employment contracts are being finalised.
- All policies continue to be reviewed and amended and will be provided to council for information purposes
- Staff appraisals are planned to take place 4 July.

5. Fire Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment was completed on 17 April but had not been acted on until recently. The necessary tasks, though few, have now been assigned to the right staff members and are being addressed.

6. Health and Safety with Third-Party Users – Liability Concerns

Recently the Parish has been a bit too hands-on with health and safety when third parties use council land, especially by asking event organisers to provide detailed information about their suppliers.

While this comes from good intentions, it could actually expose the Council to liability risks. Generally, the Parish owns the land but it is the event organiser's responsibility to ensure everything is safe and compliant.

By getting too involved, like vetting suppliers or operational details, the Parish might unintentionally create a duty of care it is not legally responsible for. If something goes wrong this could lead to claims against the Council.

To reduce this risk, we are preparing a clear usage agreement and guidance for anyone using parish land. It will:

- Define what the Parish is responsible for versus what the organisers must handle
- Stress that organisers need proper insurance and risk management
- Make clear that the Parish does not supervise or approve third-party operations
This approach aims to protect Council property responsibly while keeping legal responsibilities clear and manageable.

7. Communication and Media Strategy

A communications and media strategy is currently being drafted to support the Parish Council's position regarding planning proposals affecting Green Belt land in Chigwell. The strategy will focus on raising public awareness, mobilising community support and generating funding through local networks, social media and press engagement. It will be presented to Full Council for approval

8. Allotment, VH and Land Use Terms and Conditions

These are currently being reviewed by officers and will be updated if appropriate and any amendments will be presented to Full Council for approval

9. Unauthorised use of Station Green

See attached information report

Information Report to Council: Proposed Vigil at Station Green

Purpose

To inform Council of recent events and correspondence relating to a proposed vigil that was initially planned to take place at Station Green. This report outlines the timeline, key communication and the eventual resolution.

For information only – no decision required.

Background

On 19 June 2025, the Acting Clerk contacted a district councillor after learning that a public vigil was being planned for Parish owned Station Green without any prior consultation or formal application. It subsequently emerged that invitations to the event had already been issued, including to the press, the local MP and the Chair of Epping Forest District Council. However, the Parish Council had not been informed or involved and no permission had been granted for use of the land.

Key Communications and Timeline

19 June: The Clerk wrote to the District Councillor to:

- Clarify that Station Green is owned by Chigwell Parish Council and cannot be used for public events without Council authorisation.
- Emphasise that Epping Forest District Council has no authority over the site.
- Note that the Council had not received a request and had not approved any such event.
- Stress the importance of the bereaved family's awareness and consent, particularly given the previous distressing incident in Hainault where a vigil proceeded without family support.

The email did not refuse the vigil. Instead, it reaffirmed Council support for the intent of the event and advised that it could be formally considered at the next Full Council meeting on Thursday 26 June, provided a completed land use form was submitted by 12 noon, Friday 20 June

20 June: A follow-up email was sent by the Clerk to:

- Reiterate that public use of Parish land must not proceed without formal approval.
- Express concern that promotional activity, including distribution of invitations, was continuing despite no permissions having been granted.
- Remind district councillor of his responsibility as an elected member to uphold Council procedures and safeguard the Council from reputational and legal risk.

The district councillor was again encouraged to submit the appropriate form so that the Council could consider the request on 26 June.

21 June: The councillor responded to confirm that the vigil would not take place at Station Green, and that the gathering had been relocated:

- The Parish welcomed this outcome, noting that the BAPS Mandir Temple offers a more private and appropriate location for a respectful and sensitive event.
- The Clerk thanked the district councillor for confirming that the event would not proceed without permission and reiterated that Station Green remains available for future use subject to proper process.

Observations

- The Parish Council did not object to the vigil itself and offered a clear route to enable consideration at the next available Council meeting.
- The issue arose because the event was promoted and invitations issued before the Parish had been consulted and no request for use of the land had been made. Councillors have previously highlighted this is unacceptable behaviour by district councillors in particular
- While the event has now been appropriately relocated, the situation serves as a reminder of the importance of elected members respecting and following governance procedures particularly in sensitive circumstances involving bereavement and public interest.
- The alternative venue at Chigwell BAPS Mandir was ultimately a more suitable location for a quiet, private act of remembrance.

Conclusion

The vigil did not take place at Station Green and was relocated to a more appropriate venue with the necessary permissions in place. The Parish Council's procedures were upheld. This report is provided for transparency and to reaffirm that:

- All use of Parish land must be authorised through proper channels.
- Council remains supportive of respectful community events, provided that the correct process is followed and the community especially affected families are consulted.

For Information Only – No Action Required