

**CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL
CLERK'S REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL**

Meeting Date: 26 March 2026

1. Freedom of Information (FOI) and Subject Access Request (SAR)

The Council has received a combined Freedom of Information Request and Subject Access Request relating to an ongoing matter. Data retrieval tasks have been allocated across both Members and Officers.

Due to the volume and breadth of the information requested—and the statutory deadlines prescribed by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and UK GDPR—the work required will be significant. The Clerk is coordinating the process to ensure statutory compliance, accuracy and continuity of service.

Members should note that this will temporarily reduce officer capacity for developmental and discretionary projects.

2. Library Car Park – Boundary Fence Remedial Works

Following concerns raised by Library staff during an internal Health & Safety inspection, the Parish Council arranged necessary remedial work to the boundary fence located on Parish-owned land adjoining the library car park.

Repairs were completed promptly at a cost of **£70**, ensuring safety for Library users and the wider public.

3. Parish Council Van – Lease Renewal

The lease for the electric Parish Council van is due for renewal in **June 2026**. Officers are reviewing options, including replacing the vehicle with a more versatile model better suited to operational requirements such as:

- Grounds maintenance
- Equipment transport
- Reactive and urgent works

A detailed, costed report will be presented to Members in due course.

4. Highways and Speed Monitoring Equipment

The Council has taken delivery of, and installed, the new vehicle-activated speed sign at the cemetery pending permissions from Essex County Council to place the equipment on EFDC or County-owned roadside assets.

Initial use will therefore begin on Parish-owned land while awaiting formal consent to support wider road safety initiatives.

5. Cemetery – Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)

An EICR was commissioned following intermittent power failures at the Cemetery. The inspection identified several areas requiring remedial work. Quotes have been reviewed and, given the operational urgency, the Chairman authorised works up to £2,115.

Further EICR quotes have been received for the Parish Offices, Community Hub, and Victory Hall; however, these have been temporarily paused due to a formal written complaint issued to the previous contractor. The contractor has not responded to two communications and will now be given a final 7-day deadline to arrange remedial works or provide a refund before the matter is escalated.

6. Health & Safety Compliance

A meeting has taken place with the WorkNest Health & Safety Consultant to consolidate outstanding compliance actions into a structured programme.

A priority item is fire escape compliance at Victory Hall, which initial assessments suggest may be resolved internally by the Open Spaces Team, limiting external costs.

Other outstanding matters relate primarily to risk assessments, policy updates, and signage requirements. Due to current FOI/SAR pressures, some non-urgent Health & Safety work will need to be temporarily deferred. A revised time frame will be issued when capacity improves.

7. Business Continuity Planning

In light of the developing geopolitical situation in the Middle East—and potential impacts on UK fuel supply and related service disruptions—the Clerk has prepared a draft Business Continuity Plan (BCP).

The emerging plan includes contingencies for:

- Fuel shortages affecting staff travel
- Disruptions to utilities
- Reduced officer capacity
- Wider supply chain impacts

Draft components cover:

- Prioritisation of essential services
- Remote working arrangements
- Staff rota and alternative travel planning
- Standby communication protocols
- Contractor and supplier resilience (including cemetery and grounds maintenance)
- Public communication and emergency decision-making

The BCP will be presented to Full Council upon completion.

8. Training and CPD

The Clerk recently delivered internal staff training on staying safe in a multicultural society, focusing on awareness, prevention, and practical safeguarding steps.

In addition, the Clerk has undertaken:

- Three professional development courses on year-end processes and statutory timelines
- A New Clerks course
- Planning training for Clerks

The Clerk also intends to enrol on the CiLCA qualification later this year.

Prepared by:

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