

**CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL
OFFICER REPORT: FULL COUNCIL- LAND AT MAYPOLE JUNCTION**

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with a summary of actions undertaken by the Clerk in response to concerns raised by members of the public regarding land located opposite the Maypole Junction (Lambourne Road / Gravel Lane, Chigwell). It also sets out the current position and recommendations regarding the asset status of this land.

2. Background

Prior to this report, an update was presented to the Finance and Governance Committee and was scheduled to be reported to the Community Services and Assets Committee.

Concerns were raised by members of the public regarding the maintenance of grass at this location. Historically, grass cutting had been undertaken by the Parish Council in good faith to address these concerns. However, it was established in April 2024, through Land Registry checks, that the land in question is not owned by Chigwell Parish Council, despite being recorded on the Council's Asset Register.

3. Actions Undertaken

Significant officer time and resources have been dedicated to resolving this matter, including:

- Multiple site visits
- Direct engagement with the complainant
- Issuing a media statement to provide reassurance and manage public concern
- Liaison with Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council

Following this engagement, and with the support of Councillor Lee Scott (Essex County Councillor), Essex County Council Highways has confirmed that the land falls under its responsibility.

As a result:

- The site has now been added to Essex County Council's grass cutting and maintenance schedule
- This outcome has been communicated to the original complainant

It is noted that, in the interim period, the grass at the site has been cut by persons unknown.

4. Asset Register Position

This land is currently recorded on the Parish Council's Asset Register. Given the confirmation that the land is not within Parish Council ownership or responsibility, its inclusion is considered incorrect.

Following the Annual Meeting of Full Council, the Clerk was instructed to prepare an Asset Management Policy and Procedure. This has now been completed and submitted following recommendation by the Finance and Governance Committee.

5. Clerk's Position

In light of the confirmation from Essex County Council Highways and the adoption of a formal Asset Management Policy, it is the Clerk's view that:

- The land at Maypole Junction should not be recorded as a Parish Council asset
- Retaining the land on the Asset Register presents a risk of ongoing confusion and potential liability
- The Council should ensure its records accurately reflect assets under its ownership and control

6. Recommendations / Next Steps

Members are requested to:

- Consider approval of the Asset Management Policy and Procedure (as submitted separately)
- Agree the removal of the Maypole Junction land from:
 - The Parish Council Asset Register
 - The Council's website
 - Any associated records and documentation

Prepared by:

Jason Selvarajah MSc

Clerk & Proper Officer

Chigwell Parish Council

Appendix A: Asset Disposal Form

Form to be completed by Parish Clerk and presented to the Full Parish Council
in line with the Asset Management, Retention and Disposal Policy.

List of Assets to be Disposed:

Asset reference serial number	Description	Location	Purchase Date	Original Cost	Disposal Value
10093183611	Land: The Maypole open space	Lambourne Road	Not Known	£1.00	£1.00

Reasons for Disposal

This area of land has historically been included within the Chigwell Parish Council Asset Register. However, following a formal review undertaken in April 2024, it was established through Land Registry checks that the land is unadopted and not within the ownership of Chigwell Parish Council.

Over a number of years, and in response to public concerns relating to grass cutting, the placement of planters, and seasonal decorations (including Christmas trees), it had been assumed that the Parish Council owned and managed the land. This assumption led to maintenance activities being undertaken in good faith; however, this position was subsequently confirmed as incorrect.

Further investigations, supported by Essex County Councillor Lee Scott, have now established that the land falls under the responsibility of Essex County Council. Essex County Council Highways has confirmed this position and has formally incorporated the site into its maintenance programme.

In light of this confirmation, it is recommended to Full Council (26 June 2026) that the land be removed from the Parish Council's Asset Register for the following reasons:

The Parish Council has never owned, adopted, or held legal title to the land
No formal maintenance agreement or legal responsibility exists between the Parish Council and the landowner
Retaining the land on the Asset Register creates inaccuracy in the Council's records
Continued inclusion presents a risk of future misunderstanding, reputational issues, and potential liability.

Removal will ensure clarity of responsibility and prevent recurrence of this issue

Method of Disposal:

Scrapped	N/A	Sold	N/A	Donated	N/A
<p>Additional Information: The proposed removal represents an administrative correction to the Council's Asset Register rather than the disposal of a physical asset. No financial transaction, transfer, or legal disposal process is required, as the Parish Council does not hold legal title to the land.</p> <p>The amendment ensures that the Council's records accurately reflect assets under its ownership or control and aligns with best practice in asset management, audit compliance, and financial reporting.</p> <p>No loss of Council assets will occur as a result of this action. The removal instead reduces the risk of future misunderstanding, misallocation of resources, or potential liability associated with land outside the Council's responsibility.</p> <p>All associated references to this land within Council records, publications, and the website will be updated accordingly following approval.</p>					

Date of Disposal	Minute Reference
Authorising Officer and Position Held (Sign and Print Name)	Jason Selvarajah Clerk and Proper Officer