



MEETING OF THE CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Date: Thursday 24 July 2025

Time: 7.00pm

Location: Chigwell Council Parish Offices, Hainault Road, Chigwell, IG7 6QZ

Members present:

Cllr J Braha (Chair)
Cllr O Ali
Cllr A Aradeon
Cllr E Costa
Cllr F Rizvi

Cllr D Rye (Vice Chair) #
Cllr T Amuludun
Cllr L Clark
Cllr R Hodds

Members of the Public and Councillors were asked to **NOTE** that in accordance with Standing Orders 3 (i) and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, photographing, recording, broadcasting, transmitting or otherwise reporting the proceeding of a meeting may take place.

Councillors were asked to **NOTE** that in the exercise of their functions, they must take note of the following: equal opportunities; crime and disorder; human rights; health and safety and biodiversity

FC048/25 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and ACCEPTED from Cllrs: Morgan and Jefcoate

FC049/25 - ANY OTHER ABSENCE

None

FC050/25 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Rye joined the meeting later and noted she had taken advice from the Monitoring Officer regarding appendix 8 and should would take part but not vote as advised

FC051/25 - MINUTES

Members **AGREED** by a majority that the minutes of the meeting of 26 June were an accurate representation of what took place

FC052/25 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public speaking on behalf of the CRA raised queries about the Community Use Policy and queried whether it was an additional bureaucratic hurdle and whether it was undue work on the staff.

The MOP also highlighted the recent unrest in Epping and what they saw to be unacceptable comments on WhatsApp by local government representatives that could be considered antagonistic and stoking division by stating that they believed the hotel should not be used to house those seeking asylum in the UK.

The MOP also noted the attendance query raised last meeting and advised they were please to see Cllr Aradeon in attendance

Councillors advised the Community Use Policy was triggered by unauthorised usage of Parish premises as reported to Council previously. The Policy is designed to provide an assessment process to ensure any discounted fee for the use of Parish land or facilities is fairly and evenly applied to all groups and the community benefit of any proposed activity is properly assessed before a reduced or zero fee is approved by Full Council

FC053/25 - EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Councillors considered the recommendations of Officer's report ([Appendix 2](#)) and **AGREED** to adopt the Employee Handbook 2025.

The Personnel Committee will review the wording of the Handbook at their next meeting. It was **NOTED** that if any amends are made (other than typos and similar) the Employee Handbook will need to come back to Full Council for re-adoption.

FC054/25 - CLERK RECRUITMENT PACK

Councillors considered the advertisements, job description and person specification for the Clerk and **APPROVED** them ([Appendix 3](#))

FC055/25 - POLICIES FOR ADOPTION

Councillors considered the recommendation of the Officer's report and **AGREED** to adopt the following policies:

[Grievance Policy](#)

[Drugs and Alcohol Policy](#)

[Disciplinary Policy](#)

[Recruitment Policy](#)

[Absence Management Policy](#)

[Performance Improvement Policy](#)

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

[Flexible Working Policy](#)

[Maternity and Family Friendly Policy](#)

[Volunteer Policy](#) - it was noted this was for individuals who volunteered to assist at Chigwell Parish Council and did not apply to third party volunteers, for example at community events, who would have their own policy

[Grant Application Policy](#)**FC056/25 - ALLOTMENT AGREEMENT**

Councillors considered the recommendation of the Officer's report ([Appendix 4](#)) and **AGREED** to adopt the revised Allotment Agreement effective immediately

FC057/25 - TERMS & CONDITIONS OF USE

Councillors considered the recommendation of the Officer's report ([Appendix 5](#)) and **AGREED** to adopt the revised Terms and Conditions of Use, effective immediately. It was **NOTED** that cash would be accepted until a set date to be agreed by officers (it was suggested 1st October) by which time online and card payments would be accepted and the T&Cs would be amended at that point to reflect the Council's restrictions on taking cash and cheques as appropriate without the need to return to Full Council for further approval

FC058/25 - COMMUNITY USE POLICY

Members considered the recommendation of the Officer's report ([Appendix 6](#)) and **AGREED** to adopt the Community Use Policy, effective immediately. A discussion was had around the definition of a non-denominational event held by a faith group. The policy requires that in order to apply for a discount on normal hire rates, any faith group's activities must be non-denominational and community based to qualify for consideration of a reduced rate. Faith based denominational bookings and meetings would not meet the criteria set as community use and would be charged at normal hire rates

FC059/25 - MEETINGS FOR 2025/26

At the meeting of 13 May 2025 Full Council resolved the [dates](#) the Community Service and Assets Committee were to meet. Due to prior commitments it has been requested the Community Service Meeting is moved to an evening other than Tuesday or Thursday. The following changes to the agreed dates were proposed:

Tuesday 12 August to be held Wednesday 13 August
Tuesday 14 Oct to be held Wednesday 15 October
Tuesday 2 December to be held Wednesday 3 December
Tuesday 10 Feb to be held Wednesday 11 February
Thursday 9 April to be held Wednesday 8 April
Tuesday 5 May to be held Wednesday 6 May

No agreement to change the dates was reached therefore they remain as previously agreed by Full Council. The meeting on 12 August was cancelled due to being inquorate. The dates for the remaining meetings for the year will be proposed at the next CSAC meeting and returned to Full Council for approval

FC060/25 - BENCH AT BUS STOP

At the Council meeting of 26 June Cllr Clarke was appointed to liaise with District Councillor Alan Lion and County Councillor Lee Scott to support a request to ECC for a future upgrade of the Fencepiece Road bus stop. Council heard a progress report on the bus stop/bench from Cllr Clarke, namely she had spoken to Cllr Lion who had confirmed there was a process to submit the

site for consideration as part of the ECC bus stop improvement programme. Cllr Clarke confirmed she had received forms from Cllr Lion to be completed

FC061/25 - REINVESTMENT OF FIXED DEPOSIT - CHARITY BANK

On 26 June Council resolved to reinvest into a new 1-year fixed term account with Charity Bank at 4.01% interest, authorised the RFO to carry out the reinvestment and record the transaction in line with Council procedures. Council **NOTED** that Charity Bank have since advise the available rate has been reduced to 3.88% and the original sum of £85,000 has been reinvested at this rate.

FC062/25 - STRATEGIC USAGE REVIEW

The Council NOTED the Progress Report:

On 26 June Council resolved to take the recommended immediate and short term actions. To that end meetings are being arranged with stakeholders. The LFCG have been advised of the review and invited to meet informally ahead of a more structured meeting. The Parish continue to negotiate the terms of the grant with EFDC.

FC063/25 - VICTORY HALL GRANT

Members considered and resolved to **AGREE** the following motion:

“That Chigwell Parish Council resolves not to accept the current terms of the EFDC Shared Prosperity Fund grant agreement unless and until EFDC agrees to contribute financially to cover associated operational costs in the form of an hourly rental contribution or limits its usage clause to a fixed term and clearly defined user groups to allow additional occupation of premises by Parish staff and regular commercial hire. In the event such revisions are not agreed, CPC shall seek the allocation of the grant to an alternative suitable infrastructure in Chigwell and/or withdraw from the current grant bid while pursuing alternative funding or internal capital improvements to Victory Hall in a manner consistent with its fiduciary duty to Chigwell residents.”

FC064/25 - VICTORY HALL WORKS

To receive an update from the Chair of the Council

FC065/25 - USE OF PARISH OFFICES

The Council NOTED the Progress Report:

On 26 June Full Council authorised officers to begin formal negotiations with the local Primary Care Network, the ICB and other stakeholders regarding a lease for the existing office building, strictly conditional on its use as a GP surgery. Discussions have begun with the Primary Care Network and initial feedback is very positive. The PCN are engaging with the ICB to identify potential practitioner partners. There has been some delay due to absences of stakeholders due to annual leave but it is advised matters may be progressed rapidly once the ICB is able to update.

Full Council further approved in principle the concept of relocation of staff from the current office building to alternative premises (subject to feasibility and refurbishment assessment). The feasibility is being assess as part of the Strategic Usage Review of the Community Hub

A costed plan for staff relocation and refurbishment of alternative premises in conjunction with any existing works if possible is being considered by F&G but the issue of the proposed grant funding needs to be clarified first

Officers are researching funding opportunities in consultation with local stakeholders. A business case and strategy including planning feedback, financial implications, community consultation and legal safeguards in any proposed lease terms is in the very early stages

FC066/25 - PARISH BUSES

The Council NOTED the Progress Report:

On 26 June Full Council approved the immediate removal of the stolen minibus from the Council's asset register and this has been completed. The Clerk was duly authorised to negotiate the sale of the remaining minibus to Essex County Council. Negotiations have been delayed by the unscheduled absence of the County Councillor. A discussion is scheduled for next week when they return to full time work. Final sale terms will be subject to Full Council approval

FC067/25 - CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL DRAFT STRATEGY PLAN

Cllr Rizvi explained the importance of aligning the projects and budgets for the next three years to set strategic objectives for the Council. She advised Councillors she would be issuing some proposed meeting dates.

FC068/25 - ACTING CLERK REPORT

Members **NOTED** [Appendix 7](#) and the recommendations of [Appendix 8](#)).

Cllr Rye joined the meeting and noted she had taken advice from the Monitoring Officer regarding appendix 8 and should would take part but not vote as advised

Members **AGREED** that:

The content of the report and the officers' recommendations to safeguard the Council's reputation was **NOTED**.

Council **RESOLVED** not to request the councillor concerned provide documented evidence of a personal retraction on all their social media sites or a written apology to the Council.

The Council **RESOLVED** that further steps may be appropriate in relation to the matter, including referral under the Code of Conduct, reviewing the Council's Media, Communications and Email Policy or other procedural remedies.

FC069/25 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD OR FOR DISCUSSION WITH NO DECISION

Cllr Rye noted she had forwarded the emails of interested parties to the Chigwell Traffic group.

FC070/25 - DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Thursday 28 August at 7.00pm was **AGREED**

FC071/25 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

Members **CONSIDERED** and **AGREED** the following motion proposed by the Chair:

“That 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.”

FC072/25 - HR REPORT

Members **CONSIDERED** a progress report on the ongoing findings and recommendations of the HR Consultant, **NOTED** the findings and **AGREED** the contracted hours of a staff member be adjust as recommended to 37 hours from 35 hours

FC073/25 - LEGAL MATTERS - FROGHALL LANE JUDICIAL REVIEW

Members **NOTED** the correspondence relating to the request for a Judicial review and that the request was now before the Court awaiting a decision as to whether a JR will be granted