



CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 26th January 2023 @ 7.30pm held at Parish Council Offices, Hainault Road, Chigwell, IG7 6QZ for the purpose of transacting the business itemised below.

Present: Cllr. C. Jefcoate (Chair), Cllr. N. Akhtar (Vice Chairman), Cllr. R. Chahal- Holden, Cllr. L. Morgan-Skinsley, Cllr. E. Costa, Cllr. R. Hodds, Cllr. T. Gaffar, Cllr. S. Raza, Cllr. F. Rizvi, Clerk – Karen Kuderovitch

1/23.	RECORDING OF MEETINGS 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. The Clerk asked Members of the Public to declare if they were recording.
2/23.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 🙌 Cllr. P. Bhanot – working, Cllr. R. Phull - personal commitment, Cllr. F. Rizvi – no apologies. The Council voted to accept the apologies and the submitted reasons.
3/23.	DECLARATION OF INTERESTS All Members were be reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. They are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they have not previously notified her about it. The Clerk offered members the opportunity to declare any interests and note them. None declared.
4/23.	MINUTES 🙌 No minutes were approved – 22 nd December 2022 to next full Council meeting.
5/23.	PUBLIC FORUM On the motion of the Chairman the meeting was adjourned for 15 minutes for members of the public/press to address the Council (extendable by the Chairman - see Standing Orders). The allocated time to be shared equally amongst member of the public. No person shall speak for more than 5 mins. Once the public session is closed, members of the public have no rights to take part in the meeting. Members of the public <i>No1 – Volvo garage approved at appeal – view given a missed opportunity by Parish Council, should of engaged with developer to engage a better position with developer – loss for the community.</i> 30th November 2022 – what is the outcome of the carried motion?

No 2 – Vexatious complaints policy – view given that members of the public being restricted/blocked. Referenced a meeting with Cllr. Chahal Holden on 22nd Dec 2022. Claim made a vexatious policy is unlawful.

No 3 – Meeting 22nd December 2022 – 2 questions of the Chair re: monopole telecommunications outside King William – money being funded by ECC for rebuilding Chigwell County Primary. Monopole - reference to letter sent to EE – possibly resited elsewhere.

No 4 – Concerns about 13/23 and although admired the work being done, concerns about the area to be used and would it be useful. Youth issues. Public consultation for views on this and other projects.

No 5 – timeframe for responses – Clerk responded she has to prioritise workload, there was no specific timeframe, and a response would be forthcoming asap.

The Chairman suggested responses should be reviewed by Council before being released, or Councillors copied in. The Clerk asked for clarification that all responses that come from the Clerk should be sent to all Councillors beforehand and this was not an Agenda item. To be discussed at Finance & Governance Committee and an indicative timescale for responses.

Clerk stated a response would be forthcoming.

The Chairman suggested that all responses should be passed through full Council before being sent as the Clerk is responding on behalf of Councillors. The Clerk queried this. It was also suggested that when Clerk responds all Councillors should be at the least copied in so they are aware of any issues. The Clerk advised that this was not an Agenda item and the matter be put on the Finance & Governance Agenda, with a time period for responses to residents.

Cllr. Rizvi was asked to not respond directly to questions in the public session.

6/23.

FINANCE 📈 £

- a) The Chairman thanked the Finance Officer for her work, supported by the Clerk. Cllr.N. Akhtar asked for item 13/23 to be moved forward as this would affect the funding. The Chairman responded this was not possible and that the Agenda item ad been started and the budget could not be adjusted at this stage. Cllr. N. Akhtar asked again, the Chairman responded information had been asked for and that it was not possible as the figures need to be agreed for Precept by 31st January 2023. The Clerk advised that if a project is approved then virements could be made from other projects not progressing. The Clerk confirmed this course of action was recommended and future virements could be made from inactive projects.

It was resolved unanimously to agree the Budget.

Precept 2023/24:

3 proposals were tabled & discussed, with various views shared:

- 1% increase
- 2% decrease
- 0% increase.

The Clerk advised against a 2% decrease and recommended staying the same as the Precept for 22/23. A recorded vote was requested by Cllr. Morgan-Skingsley. 2% decrease - (1 in favour, 1 abstain & 7 against); 1% voted upon (4 for and 5 against); a 0% increase (5 for and 4 against). **It was resolved** by a majority to increase the

Precept by 0% for 2023/24 to , the amount to be submitted to Epping Forest District Council by 31st January 2023. The Precept form was signed by the Responsible Finance Officer and the Chairman. The Finance Officer was thanked again for her efforts.

- b) HSBC – **it was resolved** unanimously to approve 3 new signatories (Cllr. Jefcoate, Cllr. Morgan-Skingley & Cllr. R. Chahal Holden) remove any signatories of ex staff. **It was resolved** unanimously for a replacement Primary user on the Clerks Account to be the Finance Officer.
- c) Cambridge – **it was resolved** unanimously for a second replacement signatory – Cllr. C. Brown (Jefcoate), joining Cllr. P. Bhanot.
- d) Unity Bank – **it was resolved** unanimously to approve the Finance Officer as the primary contact (administrator).
- e) Unity Bank – **it was resolved** unanimously to approve an application for a multi-pay cards (Clerk/RFO & Cemetery Manager). Expenditure limit was agreed at £500 and any expenditure over this amount to be approved by the Chair, in line with Financial Regulations 6.18.
- f) Barclays – approval of application for a primary account – the Clerk reported that the Unity account had been administered as a full switch to transfer direct debits/Standing Orders, therefore ‘closing’; the Barclays account. The Clerk was liaising with Barclays Account Manager to reactivate the account but if it was not possible then a new application would have to be made.
- g) Q1-3 budget position report - due from RFO asap after 31 December. Report had been circulated to full Council, and reviewed by F&G.
- h) Members to consider 3 quotes to purchase a mower. The Clerk reported at the last CAC Meeting the Committee approved a recommendation to purchase. The Chair gave a view that full Council was required to view all 3 quotes. The Clerk advised that the quote chosen was only required to be presented for consideration. Cllr. L. Morgan-Skingley gave information on how the recommendation was provided by the Cemetery Manager and referred to the old mower being sold/traded in. The Clerk displayed the recommendation on screen. The new mower would be added to the Asset Register and the old one removed. The Chair made reference to quotes being published. The Clerk disagreed with this and that quotes cannot be published before being considered by full Council. The Clerk asked if this recommendation was being approved. The Chair asked again for sight of the 3 quotes. The Clerk confirmed that the CAC Committee had viewed all the quotes. The Clerk suggested delaying the decision. The Clerk asked for permission to leave the meeting and seek quotes. Cllr. Rizvi relayed a view that we have professional staff who have presented a recommendation and the recommendation should be considered for approval. Cllr. Akhtar stated the other 2 quotes did not meet the specification required. The Clerk returned without the 2 quotes and the Chair recommended a decision was made on the agreement the 3 quotes were published. **It was resolved** unanimously to proceed with the quote from George Browns as follows:

One New Kubota G261 Low Dump Ride On Mower

Specification to include:

- Kubota 3 Cylinder Water-cooled 25HP ETVS Diesel Engine
- 20 Litre Fuel Tank
- Hydrostatic Transmission

Proposal: A Chair of Chigwell Parish may only be Chair for no more than two consecutive terms. **It was resolved** by a majority vote (8 for and 1 against) to accept and adjust the Standing Orders.

b) INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Agreed – the revised Information and Data Protection Policy (to remove references to a council with an expenditure below or above £25K and replace with requirements for a local authority with an expenditure in excess of £200K). The Council's Information and Data policy to state the Council will act in line with the Local GOvt Code, its own Transparency Policy and statutory requirements

c) FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members reviewed and approved an adjustment to item 3.3 – December

d) VEXATIOUS POLICY

Council reviewed an amendment to the policy (full Council to impliment not the Clerk). The Clerk recommended full Council should approve. The Chair relayed a view that the Vexatious Policy can only come into force when complaints process & FOI have been exhausted. **It was resolved** unanimously to accept this.

e) APPROVAL OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Community Assets Committee – the Clerk advised that the Terms of Reference had been approved at the CAC Meeting for recommendation to full Council. The Chairman listed the changes. The Clerk relayed item 4.5 of the Financial Regulations. After discussion **it was resolved** unanimously to omit the following a):

a) *For actions requiring expenditure to ensure the smooth running of the Parish Council, the Clerk is authorised to approve these actions subject to the limitations laid down by the Parish Council's financial regulations (section 4.5 limit of £1,000).*

b) The Clerk explained the reasoning for suggesting 6 Councillors of the CAC Committee. A vote was taken (4 votes for 5 members and 5 votes for 6 members. **It was resolved** by a majority vote to increase to a maximum of 6 members. The Clerk relayed a future proposal to combine CAC & CSC Committees.

c) The Committee will review these Terms of Reference each year at the first meeting of the committee following the Annual (or First) Council Meeting and if necessary. Recommended changes will be presented to the Council at the next appropriate Full Council meeting. **It was resolved** unanimously to accept this change.

The Chairman asked residents which items they were present for.

- Community Services Committee. Draft to be reviewed by CSC Committee and recommendation to full Council.

9/23.

STREET LIGHTING

	<p>Council reviewed whether to have some lights on overnight for free or pay £65K to have all lights on for this four-hour period each night in 23/24. Budget £16,000 for the year 22/23. Spend so far £14,000 for 1 quarter. Cllr. L. Morgan-Skingley reported that lights EFDC have adjusted the hours the lights are now turning lights off at midday – 6am – 4 hour period now a 6 hour period. The Chair reported that streetlights were kept on by ECC in places of high traffic, public CCTV, road signs & bollards etc all over Essex. In all the Parishes in Essex Chigwell is the only one paying to keep the lights on. The Clerk added that an article had been placed in the November Newsletter for residents views and no responses had been received. January – March 2023 was to be paid. After discussion and considering the large expense (£65,000 per annum), it was resolved by a majority vote (6 for and three against to opt into Essex’s PNL and that there would be no funding for additional lighting in 2023/24. Cllr. Chahal-Holden requested a review if energy prices come down. It was agreed to review in 6 months.</p>
10/23.	<p>PARISH NEWSLETTER Clerk reported Council needs to think about the next edition. The company was engaged at short notice, they missed some roads due to sickness. The Clerk asked them to do the roads and was informed they ad been done. No complaints had been received directly about non-delivery. Council needs to decide whether going forward hand deliveries would be made or a digital version. The Clerk recommended continuing to hand deliver to ensure residents are non-excluded. The Chair stated previously Council paid approx. £3,700 for delivery. The Clerk reported the charge for this Newsletter was £600. Cllr. Hodds suggested 13 roads had not been delivered and asked where were the spare copies & suggested applying for a refund. The Clerk confirmed 4,000 were printed. Cllr. Gaffar suggested the newsletter was not outdated and Council should move on. The Clerk stated she had no control over the company. The Chair summarised that Cllr. Gaffar was right, the company had not fulfilled on their promise and the company should be pursued. Cllr. Gaffar suggested the cost of £600 and the conversation likely costing more. Cllr. Chahal-Holden suggested contacting the company and give them out, albeit out of date. The Chair reminded that the key was distribution. It was resolved unanimously that the next edition would be digital but with some copies to be made available locally, the Clerk to apply for a refund from the company and return any leftover copies.</p>
11/23.	<p>EFDC – WASTE COLLECTIONS Clerk asked for the item to be deferred. Cllr. Morgan-Skingley reported EFDC are sending more vehicles out for collection.</p>
12/23.	<p>CHAIRMAN/CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES REPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Assets – Cllr. Morgan-Skingley reported good feedback from the warm spaces since 17th November - 35 regular attendees, Limes Farm Synagogue donated food items and this helped residents over Christmas. Epping Forest Food Bank visited Limes Farm Community Group – possibility of a food bank for warm places, supports Cllr. Akhtar suggestion to help with a food crisis. Eat well for less was mentioned. Good feedback from Christmas lights.

	<p>Gas cylinders continues to be an issue. Suggestion to open the Community Hall for a second day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Services – no report • Planning – no report. • Finance & Governance/Chairmans report – The Chair attended a Planning Appeal Hearing and made representation on behalf of the Council on the Volvo Garage on 8th December which had been circulated to all Councillors. Christmas lights attended, Scott Donovan was thanked for his assistance, together with Cllr. L. Morgan-Skinsley/Cllr. Hodds on their work with warm spaces. Menorah was also attended. Finance & Governance – difficult year, costs increasing, thanks to the Finance Officer for the Budget. Internal Audit due 30th January 2023.
13/23.	<p>REVIEW OF ACTION PLAN/COMMUNITY PROJECTS 📌</p> <p>Cllr. Akhtar reported on a proposed community project for the Queen Elizabeth Meadow to create an area to improve health & well-being. The Chair stated and said she thought this was a wonderful idea, however, had concerns about pedestrian access on the meadow. Cllr. Akhtar reported that there was a national crisis with obesity & diabetes especially with children, which is a multifactorial issue, but is partly due to a lack of education in eating habits. Cllr. Akhtar has worked with many charities and organisations across the Country in last few years. The project would proceed through several phases. The Clerk showed photos from a visit by herself & Cllr. Akhtar to Loughton's Grow Community Garden which has been running for several years and has proven incredibly successful by the local community. The Chair stated the Council was supportive and the first step was to consider whether a change of use to Planning use was required.</p> <p>Council to consider & resolve to agree in principle. Funding for the project was proposed. The Chair stated this was not in the budget. The Clerk stated a virement could be made to the existing budget, to which the Chair and the other council members agreed. Cllr. Morgan-Skinsley stated £2,500 had been spent on a bio-diversity report for the area. Cllr. Chahal-Holden suggested another working group to look at what needs to be done & costs. Members appointed were Cllr. Akhtar, Cllr. Raza, Cllr. Gaffar & Cllr. Rizvi. Proposal was agreed by all members.</p> <p>The Clerk to help with fundraising.</p> <p>ECC Climate Change Fund grant scheme – members considered & approved for the Clerk to make an application for funding to replace the hedge in QE meadow as per the diversity report. Cllr. Akhtar suggested that after the proposal be considered at the Working Group. This was agreed.</p>
14/23.	<p>WEB SITE</p> <p>Update from Clerk on website compliance with our Transparency policy - written report from the Clerk requested</p>
15/23.	<p>TRAINING</p> <p>Clerk to report on Code on Conduct training - written report from the Clerk requested</p>
16/23.	<p>VICTORY HALL/MEMBERS CLUB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Victory Hall progress with Members' Club – a meeting was planned for 27th January – Cllr. Chahal-Holden suggested the business plan had not been received. The Clerk confirmed it had been sent. The Chair suggested the plan had no revenue figures. Cllr. Rizvi stated the intention of the meeting being an assessment of what needed doing. A resident suggested this meeting should have happened 3 years ago. Another resident suggested the revenue was not

	<p>included in the business plan as the Parish Council had not indicated costs. The Clerk advised the Chair that residents should not be interjecting the meeting. A further report on the outcome at next full Council Meeting with timelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on progress with Primary Care Network visit to assess clinical viability of parish buildings (office and members club). The Chair reported on a visit from Primary Care Trust and reported the potential was in the Parish Office building and the Council had 3 expensive buildings to run. Cllr. Akhtar suggested the Parish Office was never intended to be offered for use. The Chair disagreed with this. The Clerk asked to speak and stated from her recollection there was never any discussion at full Council about the Parish Office being offered and it was the Members Club only. Cllr. Morgan-Skingley asked if it was to buy or lease. A brief discussion took place on the various possibilities. A working group was agreed and a meeting to be arranged in due course with the 4 chairs of the Parish Council Committees. Future agenda item.
17/23.	<p>CHIGWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH/ESSEX POLICE 📌</p> <p>Review of the meeting held on 22nd December 2022. Members to discuss an action plan to raise awareness in Chigwell – deferred.</p>
18/23.	<p>RESIDENTS CONTACT REPORTING /COMPLAINTS</p> <p>Deferred.</p>
19/23.	<p>TRAINING</p> <p>Clerk to report on Code of Conduct Training for full Council - written report from the Clerk requested</p>
20/23.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>9th March 2023.</p>
	<p>THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CONFIDENTIAL AND A VOTE WAS TAKEN TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC/PRESS 📌 (ref: Schedule 12 of the Local Gov. Act 1972).</p>
21/23.	<p>a) EMPLOYMENT MATTER 📌</p> <p>Cllr. Chahal-Holden gave an update.</p> <p>b) VEXATIOUS POLICY 📌</p> <p>Members reviewed the report and the recommendation from the Clerk. After discussion and various views, it was voted upon applying the policy. It was resolved as follows:</p> <p>1st person – (4 for and 5 against)</p> <p>2nd person – (4 for and 5 against)</p> <p>3rd person – (4 for and 5 against)</p> <p>Warning letters – it was resolved not to be sent (4 for and 4 against- Chairman used casting vote)</p> <p>c) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – INTERNAL REVIEW</p> <p>Appointment of Cllrs. Rizvi & Costa to undertake the review & report.</p>