



## MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL

**Date:** Thursday 25 June 2026

**Time:** 7.00pm

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

### **Members present:**

CLlr D Rye (Chair)  
CLlr O Ali (Left 8.17pm)  
CLlr L Clark (Arrived at 7.15pm)  
CLlr R Hodds (Arrived at 8.44pm)  
CLlr L Morgan- Skingsley  
CLlr J Braha  
CLlr E Costa

### **Officers present:**

J. Selvarajah MSc: Clerk and Proper Officer  
O. Linkeviciene- Responsible Financial Officer (Left 7.42pm after finance session)

**Members of the press and public are invited to attend this meeting.** Members of the Public and Councillors are 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 are 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

### **1. FC001/26- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members received and **AGREED** to accept any apologies for absence from CLlr E Skingsley, CLlr T Amuludun, CLlr F Rizvi and CLlr C Jefcoate.

### **2. FC002/26- ANY OTHER ABSENCE**

None.

### 3. FC003/26- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr L Morgan- Skingsley declared a non-pecuniary interest as she assists at the Community Hub, which was due to be discussed later the agenda. She stated this would not affect her ability to take part in decision-making.

No other declarations of interest or Disclosable Pecuniary Interests were made.

### 4. FC004/26- MINUTES

Members considered the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 21 May 2026 ([Appendix 1](#))

Cllr L Morgan- Skingsley asked that it be recorded that she had not agreed with a decision taken at the previous meeting and disappointment it had not been captured at the time. The specific decision will be cross-referenced to May 2026 minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2026 be **APPROVED** as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to a note being added recording Cllr Morgan- Skingsley's disagreement with the relevant decision.

### 5. FC005/26- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

### 6. FC006/26- FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 6.6 – A Payroll Statement 2026/27

As per Financial Regulations 6.6, for each financial year, the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council may authorise in advance for the year.

Council considered and **AUTHORISED** in advance for the year **2026/27** the Payroll Statement in relation to obligations as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, and pension contributions based on the Local Government Service Pay Agreement 2025/26 – pay rates.

Members **NOTED** that officers will notify council regarding any amendment when the pay rates are updated ([Appendix 2](#))

### 7. FC007/26- REVIEW OF DIRECT DEBITS AND BACS PAYMENTS

The Financial Regulations at 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9 require the review every two years of variable and fixed direct debit instructions, standing orders and BACS payments due. The Council are thus asked to review the current arrangements made to pay utility suppliers, non-domestic rates, contractual and agreed direct debits, Standing Orders and BACS payment instructions for the financial year 2026/27. Members **REVIEWED** and **APPROVED** the contract payments made via BACS to ICE MEDIA/CONNECT for £120, including VAT, for *Professional phone system recordings* for 2026/27

**8. FC008/26- FINANCIAL REGULATION 5.15 EXPENDITURE**

As per Financial Regulations 5.15, Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by the Clerk or RFO, under delegated authority, for any items below £1,000 excluding VAT. Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

Members **APPROVED** the attached expenditure of individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure authorised by the Clerk or RFO for the period to 25 June 2026 ([Appendix 3](#))

**9. FC009/26- FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT**

As per Financial Regulations 5.18, in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure.

The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

Members **NOTED** the attached expenditure of £1,950 (VA/223) to engage a specialist contractor to carry out the works on the shallow grave at the Cemetery on 1 June 2026 for a funeral on 4 June 2026 ([Appendix 4](#))

**10. FC010/26- STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026**

Members **REVIEWED** and **APPROVED** the statement of internal control signed by the Clerk and RFO ([Appendix 5](#))

**11. FC011/26- YEAR-END INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – 2025/26**

Members **REVIEWED** and **NOTED** the internal auditors' report and recommendations for digital and data compliance: that a data audit is completed during 2026/27 to comply with GDPR regulations. This may be included in the audit testing for Governance Assertion 10 in future years.

Members **APPROVED** activity for officers to implement ([Appendix 6](#))

**12. FC012/26- THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2025/26 (AGAR 2025/26) SECTION 1 AND SECTION 2**

Members were **ADVISED** that, under guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return **2025/26**, Sections 1 and 2 must be completed, approved and signed by Council.

**A. Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 ([Appendix 7](#))**

Members read out each section 1-10 within the annual governance statement 2025/26 and verbally agreed “yes” to sections 1-8 and 10, stating “Not applicable” for point 9 and the form was signed by the chair and clerk as **APPROVED**.

#### **B. Section 2 – Accounting Statement 2025/26 ([Appendix 8](#))**

The financial year 2025/26 has been closed. The Accounting statement was signed by the Responsible Financial Officer on 22 May 2026 and circulated to all members of the Council on 26 May 2026.

Formal **APPROVAL** of the **2025/26** accounts was given at the meeting and form signed by the Chair.

Members **CONSIDERED** and **NOTED** the income and expenditure summary and reconciliation reports provided by the Responsible Financial Officer ([Appendix 8a](#)) and ([Appendix 8b](#))

#### **13. FC013/26- PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Members were **ADVISED** that the authority must publish a single period of 30 working days during which the electorate may exercise their public rights.

It was noted that the notice of this period, together with a declaration that the accounting statements are unaudited, must be published at least one day before the inspection period commences, and that the period must include the first ten working days of July 2026.

The period for the exercise of public rights was set as commencing on **Monday 29 June 2026 and concluding on Friday 7 August 2026**.

Members were **ADVISED** by officers of these dates, and the Council **CONFIRMED** and **APPROVED** the period accordingly ([Appendix 9](#))

#### **14. FC014/26- ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE DRAFT**

The Council considered the recommendation of the Finance and Governance Committee to adopt the Asset Management Policy and Procedure.

It was **NOTED** that the Finance and Governance Committee had previously reviewed the draft policy and recommended it to Full Council for adoption.

Members **AGREED** to formally adopt the Asset Management Policy and Procedure. ([Appendix 10](#))

#### **15. FC015/26- BANK MANDATE**

The RFO considers an additional bank account signatory needs to be appointed. Members **NOMINATED** and **APPROVED** Cllr Braha as a signatory for Unity Trust Bank.

#### **16. FC016/26- PROGRESS REPORT TO THE COUNCIL REGARDING BUSINESS CASE VICTORY HALL FIRE ESCAPE PATHWAY**

**Background:**

**FC284/25** Members **NOTED** and **APPROVED** the business case and the recommendations therein for the installation of an eco-permeable fire escape pathway, emergency lighting, and associated fencing at Victory Hall ([Appendix 11](#))

**FC277/25** Following consideration, members **APPROVED** the EMR for identified priority works and statutory obligations:

Victory Hall Fire Escape Pathway Remedial Works – £6,000. This work is due to take place between 27 June- 3 July (inclusive).

Members were **UPDATED** that work associated with the Victory Hall fire escape business case has commenced.

**17. FC017/26- CHAIR'S REPORT**

Members **NOTED** the report from the Chair ([Appendix 12](#))

**18. FC018/26- UPDATE FROM THE CLERK**

Members **NOTED** the Clerk's Report ([Appendix 13](#))

Within the report, Members were invited to consider three matters requiring a decision.

**Planning Committee Membership**

Members **CONSIDERED** the options presented and **AGREED** to adopt Option 2 – Revised Terms of Reference (Full Membership with Managed Interests), whereby:

- All Parish Councillors will be members of the Planning Committee; and
- Conflicts of interest will be managed in accordance with the Code of Conduct, including declaration, withdrawal, and (where appropriate) dispensations.

This approach aligns with the Council's Standing Orders and reflects established practice across parish councils.

It was further **AGREED** that authority be delegated to the Clerk to revise wording for the Membership section of the Planning Committee Terms of Reference.

**Open Spaces Staffing and Grave Digging Capacity**

Members **CONSIDERED** the report regarding staffing levels within the Open Spaces Team and the associated risks to service delivery during periods of planned annual leave.

It was **NOTED** that grave digging requires two trained operatives, creating a potential operational risk where staffing levels are reduced, and that this may impact the Council's ability to meet burial demand.

Members **AGREED** to allocate a £5,000 contingency sum, to be transferred from Cost Code 222 (Apprentice Budget) to Cost Code 148 (Sub-Contractor Costs), to enable the engagement of external contractors for grave digging where required, thereby ensuring continuity of service.

It was further **NOTED** that officers will continue to review longer-term options to strengthen operational resilience.

### **Weed Management – Hard Surfaces**

Members **CONSIDERED** the report regarding weed management on hard surface areas, including cemetery roadways and Victory Hall car parks, and the operational challenges arising from the current prohibition on the use of glyphosate.

It was **NOTED** that alternative methods, such as manual removal, strimming, and burning, are resource-intensive, and that complaints had been received regarding the condition of weeds within the cemetery.

Members **AGREED** to permit the controlled and limited use of herbicide on hard surfaces, subject to appropriate risk assessment and environmental controls, to maintain required standards while balancing environmental considerations.

Members **NOTED** the remaining updates contained within the Clerk's Report, including:

- Income generation opportunities with Locker Quest, with a site survey scheduled for 2 July
- Submission of permissions to Essex County Council for a Vehicle Activated Sign
- Positive progress in cemetery administration and increased service demand
- The Cemetery Action Plan
- The Memorial Safety Programme update and
- Ongoing works, including obtaining quotations for a retaining wall at Limes Avenue (with ownership currently disputed) and required plastering works to the rear stage wall at Victory Hall.

Members **NOTED** the Clerk's Report ([Appendix 13a](#))

Within the report, Full Council was asked to **CONSIDER** the matter of the Community Services and Assets Committee – Meeting Schedule and Quorum Challenges.

Members **AGREED** that the first meeting of the Community Services and Assets Committee be scheduled for Thursday 30 July 2026 at 4.00pm.

It was further **AGREED** that Committee Members will determine future meeting dates, ensuring sufficient notice is given to achieve quorum and that meetings are arranged in line with operational requirements.

Members also **AGREED** a set of standing agenda items (subject to amendment as required) to provide structure and enable officers to prepare consistent and effective reports.

**19. FC019/26- VICTORY HALL MARTYN'S LAW IMPLICATIONS**

Members **CONSIDERED** and **AGREED** to the proposed revised capacity limits for Victory Hall and **NOTED** the updates relating to the Fire Risk Assessment and the implications of Martyn's Law ([Appendix 14](#))

**20. FC020/26- LAND AT MAYPOLE JUNCTION**

Members **CONSIDERED** the Officer's report ([Appendix 15](#))

Members **NOTED** that the matter relating to land at Maypole Junction has now been resolved and that the land is maintained by Essex County Council and further **AGREED** that, following the adoption of the Asset Management Policy and Procedure, the land be removed from the Council's Asset Register and any associated references updated accordingly.

**21. FC021/26- TENDER COMMUNITY HUB AND FORMATION OF WORKING GROUP**

Members **CONSIDERED** the draft tender documentation and associated papers ([Appendix 16](#))

Following discussion, Members **AGREED** in principle that the tender documentation may be published, with a deadline for contractor engagement noted as 30 September 2026.

Members further **NOTED** that the overall layout and design may be subject to change, reflecting a greater focus on community use rather than relocation of staff from the main office, due to spatial constraints.

Members **AGREED** to establish a Member Working Group to support the development of detailed design and specifications, with recommendations to be brought back to Full Council for approval.

**22. FC022/26- MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD OR FOR DISCUSSION WITH NO DECISION**

N/A

**23. FC023/26- DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 23 July 2026 at 7.00pm

**24. FC024/26- EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

In the event that the Agenda contains items where the public interest in maintaining confidentiality may outweigh the public interest in the item being made public, **CONSIDER** the following motion to be 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."

## 25. FC025/26- SENSITIVE MATTERS

### Confidential Session – Staffing Matters

Members **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** a confidential update from the Clerk regarding current staffing matters affecting service delivery and operational capacity (**Confidential Appendix 1**).

It was **NOTED** that temporary capacity pressures exist within certain service areas. Appropriate management and mitigation measures are in place to maintain continuity of service.

Members were **ADVISED** that individual staffing matters are being managed in accordance with the Council's HR policies and procedures, with more detailed oversight provided through the Finance & Governance Committee where required.

### Confidential Session – Staffing Framework and Performance Review

Members **CONSIDERED** the recommendation from the Finance and Governance Committee in respect of the Clerk's report (**Confidential Appendix 2**).

Members **APPROVED** the proposed probationary review framework for the Clerk, the introduction of line management oversight arrangements, and the implementation of a Personal Development Review process for all staff, replacing the existing annual appraisal system.

### Notes on Declarations of Interest

Members with a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item should withdraw from the room while that item is being considered. Members should also leave the room if their continued presence is not compatible with the Council's Code of Conduct or the Seven Principles of Public Life.

The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If you become aware during meeting of an interest that has not been disclosed under this item you must immediately disclose it. You may remain in the meeting and take part fully in discussion and voting unless the interest is prejudicial.

A personal interest is prejudicial if a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard it as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest and it relates to a financial or regulatory matter.

It is not practical to offer detailed advice during the meeting on whether or not a personal interest should be declared, or whether a personal interest should be regarded as a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. Members are advised to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer well before the meeting if needed.