

**Minutes of the meeting of the Chelmsford Garden Community Council held on
4th January 2024 at 7.30pm at the Beaulieu Community Centre, 17 Centenary
Way, Chelmsford, Essex**

Present: **Councillors** Andrew Wright (Chair)
Melanie Williamson
Chloe Tron
Kuldeep Golla
Romilly Wakeling
Brian Jeapes
Cynthia Driver
Derek Drew-Smith
Neil Shah
Joel Alderman

Executive Officer Suzanne Walker

 City Councillors Susan Sullivan

 County Councillors Mike Mackrory

One member of the public was present

23/173: Apologies

Received from Councillors Jeffreys, Udoh and Stopher plus City Councillor Rose Moore and County Councillors Spence and Steel.

23/174: Declaration of interests

As a representative from the Community Vegetable Garden project is due to speak in the public session, Councillor Wright declared that he is a director of the Channels CIC that own the land.

23/175: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2023 were **approved** by all Councillors and signed by the Chair.

23/176: Community question time

A representative from the Community Gardens and Community Vegetable patch scheme (run by the Channels CIC and CCMC Ltd) attended to provide an update on the success of the project and the fact that all plots are being cultivated. She stated that the project has promoted a sense of unity and wellbeing locally. The areas gained certification in the 'It's your neighbourhood' scheme run by the Royal Horticultural Society and she is looking to renew it for 2024. She is therefore looking to engage with this Council to promote the scheme. The scheme also encourages cultivation generally in neighbourhoods whether it be private gardens or unkempt areas generally. She is also hoping to engage with land owners such as at the new Railway station. It was suggested that the lady is invited to the Health and Wellbeing focus group meeting later this month and comments as to the success of the

schemes can be included in the latest newsletter being prepared for local publication by the Council.

23/177: To receive the following Reports

23/177.1 Report from County Councillor

Councillor Mackrory reported that the amount of the grant from Government to Essex County Council does not address costs in relation to the rising costs of children and social care which will result in a deficit to the Council. A cost cutting exercise is therefore underway which will impact on the expenditure of the Council generally.

23/177.2 Report from City Councillor

Councillor Sullivan introduced herself to Councillors. She mentioned concerns in relation to accidents at the new Boreham interchange and the hope that new signage will improve the situation. She also mentioned concerns over parking as a result of the new Railway station.

23/177.3 Report from Councillors regarding attendance at external meetings

Discussed under agenda item 23/185.1.

23/177.4 Executive Officer report

The Executive Officer reported that on 14th December a training session had been provided to Councillors. On 21st December she had attended a meeting with the Police alongside the Chair and had issued a report to Councillors. The January drop in session is being promoted. The gazebo has been delivered and is being stored courtesy of the Land Trust. The two bins at Beaulieu Boulevard are to be moved into the correct position next week. Following representations from this Council, route changes have been made to the C10 bus service to include more direct routes into the City Centre at peak times. There will be an update meeting with the Chelmsford Garden Community Trust (formerly the Beaulieu Community Trust) next Thursday 11th January following the planning committee meeting. She is in the process of arranging a meeting with the school and agenda items were confirmed. Also topics were suggested for the newsletter being prepared. The dog event is being organised with a provisional suggested date of 22nd March subject to agreement with the officer from the City Council who is due to attend.

23/178: Committee Reports

The draft minutes from the planning committee held on 7th December 2023 were **noted**.

Also the draft minutes from the Communication committee meeting held on 21st December 2023 were **noted**. The suggestion for a leaflet drop to Domsey Lane residents was **agreed** alongside associated costs as was the recommendation to purchase software to assist with internet connectivity at meetings. Regarding the D Day event, Hylands had asked if the Council wishes to promote its event at an event

they are holding shortly. Councillor Wakeling agreed to attend although it was noted that promotion will be restricted to the local area to enable the number of attendees to be managed.

23/179: Financial report

23/179.1 To receive the bank reconciliation statement

The bank reconciliation statement calculated to 31st December 2023 was **noted and accepted**.

23/179.2 To receive report and approve money received and paid

The following payments were **approved** –

Receipts	£	VAT	Total
27/12/23 VAT refund			3315.83
31/12/23 Unity Bank interest			197.43
31/12/23 Cambridge BS account interest			2.70
3/1/24 CGC Trust service charge payment			2,719.80

Payments

Payments made since last meeting in accordance with annual schedule

19/12/23 Salaries and expenses			3,118.17
19/12/23 HMRC			1,443.86
19/12/23 Essex Pension Fund			1,351.18

Direct Debits

29/12/23 EE (mobile phone)	14.00	2.80	16.80
31/12/23 Unity Trust bank charges			22.50

Payments made in accordance with a resolution of the Council

20/12/23 BCT grant			7,500.00
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Payments to be made

BCT Room hire	31.67	6.33	38.00
Richard Edwards Payroll services	90.00	18.00	108.00
BCT Room hire	26.67	5.33	32.00
Chelmsford CC Election	3,340.00	0.00	3,340.00
BCT Room hire	26.67	5.33	32.00

K&M Properties	Q1 Service charge	2,719.80	679.95	3,399.75
BCT	Room hire	27.71	5.54	33.25

It was noted that the mandate holders have now accessed the online portal for the Cambridge Building Society which will enable further funds to be transferred to that account.

23/179.3 To receive the quarterly financial report.

The Quarterly financial report calculated to 31st December 2023 was considered. Subject to putting the purchase of the IT equipment into the correct column and explain lease payments in a little more detail the report was **noted and accepted**.

23/179.4 To receive report in relation to costings for IT equipment including equipment to broadcast meetings.

This report had been considered in detail by the Communication Committee and it was noted that although money is to be set aside for IT equipment further research is required prior to any decisions being made as to what will be purchased.

23/180: To Agree the budget and precept demand for financial year 2024/5

The draft budget for financial year 2024/5 was considered and discussed. Councillor Wright proposed that the draft budget be accepted and for the precept demand to be set at £217,723.00 which will result in a band D payment of £60.69. This was seconded by Councillor Drew-Smith and **agreed** by all Councillors.

23/181: To agree reserves statement

The statement of reserves for the current financial year and for financial year 2024/5 was **agreed** by all Councillors.

23/182: To agree 4 year strategy Statement

As a result of discussions at the Strategy morning the Executive Officer had prepared a first draft of the 4 year strategy statement document for consideration by Councillors. It was **agreed** to set up a working group to spend time considering the document in more depth with a view to providing a recommended document to be adopted by the Council in due course.

23/183: To agree representations in relation to Essex County Council boundary review consultation

It was noted that the map setting out the proposals for the area does not take into account the new Parish boundaries in the area as a result of the recent Community Governance review and thus the proposed wards for the area cut across this Council's area. It was considered that it would be more beneficial for residents to have one County member for the entirety of the Chelmsford Garden Community Council area and it was **agreed** to submit that representation. It was also noted that proposals take into account population numbers so it should be mentioned that this area is in the process of being developed and therefore there will be many more residents in the next few years.

23/184: To consider representations in relation to proposals to extend operational area for Escooters.

The Council had been advised that a consultation was due to be launched shortly but as yet it has yet to be received so it was **agreed** to defer this item pending receipt of the consultation papers. It was also **agreed** to request the attendance of an officer from Chelmsford City Council who is leading the consultation.

23/185: Health and Wellbeing issues

23/185.1 To consider representations to the ICB in relation to surgery and pharmacy provision in the area including any responses in liaison with other local organisations.

Councillor Williamson had attended a meeting on 3rd January 2024 at the Little Waltham surgery hosted by the Patient Participation group of that surgery and which also included representatives from Broomfield and Little Waltham Parish Councils, the lead GP of the surgery and Councillors Rose Moore and Mike Steel. She reported that the primary concern of the meeting surrounded the fact that local development will result in difficulty accessing GP services, especially as Broomfield does not have a GP surgery and that Little Waltham surgery is at capacity. Mike Steel had met with the ICB and Chelmsford City Council officers and found that section 106 money is being held for health services but there is uncertainty as to how it has been or will be utilised. There was also concerns as to the lack of pharmacies locally. Prior to further engagement with this grouping some further consideration is required of local need.

23/185.2 To receive update on meeting of the Health and Wellbeing working group.

The notes of the working group meeting were noted and it was **agreed** to host the working group focus group on 25th January 2024 to try and focus on the priorities for this area.

23/186: Open Space issues

23/186.1 To receive further update from Chelmsford City Council in relation to complaints from residents regarding issue of grass maintenance in the South East ward.

No further response has been received as yet from the City Council so the Executive Officer will attempt to progress this and report back to the next meeting.

23/186.2 To receive update regarding Bridleway 18

Response as to process is still awaited from Essex County Council so the Executive Officer will look to progress this and report back to the next meeting.

23/186.3 To consider hosting Play in the Park events and agree if to meet costs of additional play provision

Councillors **agreed** to fund the event and the Land Trust are providing the facilities of the Community Cabin. Councillor Driver reported that last year there was an issue with accessing toilet facilities for the children so this will be highlighted with the Land Trust. The bookings have been requested for two sessions on 4th April and two sessions on 25th July. It was further **agreed** to book an extra of Parkour for 4th April sessions and the 40ft inflatable assault course for the sessions on 25th July.

23/186.4 To receive report in relation to Boreham Airfield War Memorial

It was noted that the Memorial is within the Parish of Boreham but relates to servicemen who served at Boreham Airfield which is solely within this Parish. It was noted that the memorial is not listed. It was noted that it is historically significant and enquiries will be made with Boreham Parish Council in relation to its legal ownership.

23/187: To consider the issue of the need for additional road crossings in the area.

Discussions took place regarding problems crossing White Hart Lane and the possible crossing and speed limit reduction in that area. Concerns were also expressed regarding children crossing Regiment Gate to Gardiner Way. The Executive Officer was asked to liaise with the planning officer at Chelmsford City Council as to the provision required for the safe crossing of that road. Also to enquire when the speed survey will be carried out along Beaulieu Parkway.

23/188: To consider representations in relation to residents' complaints regarding lighting at Mashie Link and surrounding area.

With the aid of Councillor Mike Steel a response has been received from Essex County Council that the new LED lights are the responsibility of Essex County Council and will dim throughout the night. Once they have been in situ for 8 weeks residents will be able to request a shield if the light is shining intrusively into their property.

23/189: To receive update regarding the Beaulieu Community Trust

A detailed update will be provided to Councillors at the liaison meeting on 11th January and Councillors were encouraged to attend.

23/190: To receive report on Council Policies

The Executive Officer provided an update on policies. The Communication Committee is dealing with policies in relation to the website. It was agreed that it would be useful to adopt policies for vexatious complainants, an emergency plan and a plan for operation Menai Bridge. Councillor Drew-Smith agreed to liaise with the Executive Officer in relation to the drafting of the latter two policies.

23/191: Any matters for next agenda

It had come to the attention of the Chair that payments are being made by Hanson to Boreham Parish Council and it was requested that the Executive Officer find out more information and report at a future Council meeting.

Meeting concluded at 9.18pm