

**Minutes of the meeting of the Chelmsford Garden Community Council held on  
1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm at the Beaulieu Community Centre, 17 Centenary  
Way, Chelmsford, Essex**

**Present:**      **Councillors** Andrew Wright (Chair)  
Melanie Williamson  
Tayo Udoh  
Daniel Jeffreys  
Kuldeep Golla  
Jed Stopher  
Brian Jeapes  
Cynthia Driver  
Derek Drew-Smith  
Neil Shah  
Joel Alderman

**Executive Officer** Suzanne Walker

**City Councillors**      Rose Moore

**County Councillors** Mike Mackrory

One member of the public were present. An officer from Chelmsford City Council was present with two representatives from TIER.

**23.24/192: Apologies**

Received from Councillors Chloe Tron and Romilly Wakeling plus from City Councillors Susan Sullivan, Steve Hall and Ian Fuller and from County Councillors Mike Steel and John Spence.

**23.24/193: Declaration of interests**

Councillors Wright and Williamson declared interests as Trustees of the Chelmsford Garden Community Trust as although not an agenda item there will be mention of the Trust later in the meeting,.

**23.24/194: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were **agreed** by all Councillors and signed by the Chair.

**23.24/195: Community question time**

**23.24/195.1 To hear from an officer from Chelmsford City Council and a representative from Tier in relation to forthcoming consultation relating to E Scooters**

An officer from Chelmsford City Council provided an explanation of the Traffic Regulation Order consultation process and the fact that a Homes England Grant has been made to enable the EScooter scheme to be expanded into this area. The City Council consider that this will be beneficial as this area expands especially with the new Railway station opening. The TIER representatives also stated that residents have been supportive of this as requests have been received for them to be able to bring Scooters into the area. The City Council officer also advised that the

Department of Transport has approved the scheme in principle and the TRO is required to make it legal for the scheme to run in the area. Once the scheme is in place there is an intention to then consult further regarding the practicalities of the scheme especially as there are so many landowners and at present not all the roads are adopted. The representatives from TIER provided an explanation of how the Scooters work and can be controlled by TIER and how they can be geofenced and the speed restricted in certain area although this does depend on a strong WiFi connection. Councillors and the member of the public present asked questions in relation to the areas where the Scooters could travel, the arrangements for collection and the concern about them being left around the area and obstructing footways, how sustainable the vehicles are especially at the end of the life of batteries and whether there is data as to how far people are prepared to walk to collect a Scooter. The TIER representatives explained their process for collecting Scooters and that they will retrieve them from all areas including if they have been disposed of in ponds and the insurance arrangements. He explained that parts are recycled but was not able to comment on the disposal of batteries. They explained how members of the public can report issues on the app and via email and how users can be tracked and accounts suspended if there is bad behaviour. It is expected that there will be a mobility hub in the new Garden Community development which could include the Scooters which would be included in the design codes and for existing areas, there would be a need to use hardstanding that does not reduce parking areas. More details of areas to be used would be part of subsequent discussions.

**23.24/195.2 To hear from any members of the public present.**

No further questions asked.

**23.24/196: To consider representations in relation to proposals to extend operational area for Escooters.**

It was **agreed** that there are no representations to make in relation to the Traffic Regulation Order aspect but that Councillors will wish to engage further on the practicalities of the scheme in due course.

**23.24/197: To receive the following Reports**

**23.24/197.1 Report from County Councillor**

Councillor Mackrory reported that there is a consultation in relation to the proposed new crossing of White Hart Lane and also that Beaulieu Park School is looking to expand.

**23.24/197.2 Report from City Councillor**

Councillor Moore highlighted initiatives in relation to the safety of girls and women and the Ignite forum and will provide details to the Executive Officer.

**23.24/197.3 Report from Councillors regarding attendance at external meetings**

Councillors Williamson, Jeffreys and Golla had attended the January drop in event and a report had been provided on the issues raised by residents. Many of the issues are either on this agenda or on the agenda for the planning committee next

week and anything else will be picked up for action and if need be added to a future agenda.

#### **23.24/197.4 Executive Officer report**

The Executive officer reported on the following points:

- She had provided communication from the Chelmsford Garden Community Trust whereby a meeting had been requested with the Council to discuss issues. It was **agreed** to hold a meeting with the Trust and Councillors Alderman, Driver and Jeapes will attend.
- It was noted that Hansons has a grant scheme that may be of benefit to this Council if a specific project is planned.
- The bike marking event will be taking place on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024.
- She has had some difficulty in engaging with the school to set up a meeting and is now trying to set up an online meeting with the head teacher of Beaulieu Park school. Councillors suggested that if she continues to face issues to contact the school Governors.
- A number of questions were raised with the planning department of Chelmsford City Council and the replies had been circulated to Councillors. Clarification will be sought in relation to questions relating to the new junction at Belfry Crescent and the maintenance of the roundabout on the RDR near Albatross Way. The issues of way markers will be on the March agenda. It was noted that the developers are obliged to carry out a speed survey of the RDR and if this demonstrates speeding to install average speed cameras. Councillors are anxious that this is dealt with as soon as possible and asked that City and County Councillors are asked to also bring pressure to bear in this regard.
- It was noted that discussions have taken place with Chelmsford City Council in relation to biodiversity issues and The Wedge and a full report will be made available in time for the March meeting.
- The dog event will take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. A poster has been designed and rosettes for the 'dog with the best personality' competition will be purchased.
- She had provided some basic training to Councillors regarding the Zoho system to some Councillors and if others need assistance they should ask.
- Meetings have taken place with the Land Trust including a meeting yesterday online with the CEO of the Land Trust and notes of the meetings have been circulated to Councillors.
- She is arranging for Councillors to be able to attend the Station Task force meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March which will include a site visit.
- The 4 year strategy document is progressing and will be included as an agenda item at the March meeting.
- Chelmsford City Councillor Ian Fuller has advised that the parking consultation will be launched soon.

**23.24/198: Committee Reports**

The draft minutes of the planning committee meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were noted.

**23.24/199: Financial report**

**23.24/199.1 To receive the bank reconciliation statement**

The bank reconciliation statement calculated to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 was noted and accepted.

**23.24/199.2 To receive report and approve money received and paid**

The following payments and receipts were noted and approved:

<b>Receipts</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>VAT</b>	<b>Total</b>
17/1/24	VAT Refund			2,224.65
<b>Payments</b>				
<b>Payments made since last meeting in accordance with annual schedule</b>				
23/1/24	Salaries and expenses			2,364.94
	HMRC (PAYE Jan)			886.00
	Essex Pension Fund (Jan.)			977.07
<b>Direct Debits</b>				
29/1/24	EE (mobile phone)	14.00	2.80	16.80
<b>Payments made in accordance with a resolution of the Council</b>				
26/1/24	Cambridge Building Society			50,000.00
<b>Payments to be made</b>				
CGC Trust	5 meetings February	134.14	26.83	160.97
CGC Trust	1 meeting February	23.75	4.75	28.50
CGC Trust	1 meeting January	13.33	2.67	16.00
CGC Trust	1 meeting February	14.17	2.83	17.00
A Wright	reimburse Domain hosting	7.50	1.50	9.00
A Wright	reimburse Domain hosting	8.25	1.65	9.90
D Jeffrey	Mileage claim	40.50	0.00	40.50

**23.24/199.3 To receive report regarding website accessibility and consider actions to resolve issues raised.**

Councillors noted a report from the Executive Officer which reported that two independent website accessibility tests had revealed some non-compliance issues on the website which are structural and thus can only be remedied by the website provider. It is a legal obligation for public sector websites to be compliant with website accessibility legislation. An initial approach had been made to the website provider who have refused to accept that there is an issue. Councillors **agreed** to release a more detailed report from Aubergine to the website provider with the request that they remedy the structural defects in order to honour their assurance of the provision of a WCAG compliant website. The Executive Officer will report back as to the outcome.

**23.24/199.4 To consider and approve the Financial Risk assessment.**

Subject to clarifying the inspection requirements for assets and setting out the actions being taken by the Council to make sure it has a compliant website the risk assessment was **approved** by Councillors.

**23/24/199.5 To consider and approve the Data Audit**

Subject to noting a consent clause on the website for residents to receive updates the Data Audit was **approved** by Councillors.

**23.24/199.6 To specify the budget for the Communication Committee for financial year 2024/2025.**

Upon the recommendation of the Communications Committee it was agreed to increase the budget for the D Day event to £3,000.00 in addition it was agreed that from the main Council budget, the following limits shall be set for the Communications committee for financial year 2024 – 2025:

<b>Budget heading</b>	<b>purpose</b>	<b>Amount in budget £</b>
Promotional activities	Flyers, distribution, posters etc.	2,000.00
IT equipment	Set aside for new laptop, new equipment to broadcast meetings etc.	6,285.00
Special events to be hosted by the Council	Events hosted by the Council from 1/4/24 – 31/3/25	10,000.00

**23/24/199.7 To consider the funding proposal from the Development consortium.**

It was noted that the developer consortium had made an offer of a grant to this Council of £50,000 towards the cost of employing a new employee but had stated that the intent would be for the money to be set off against their Section 106 obligations generally and would be paid for 1 year over 4 instalments. Councillors considered the offer and as budget has been set aside to cover the cost of a new

employee it was considered that it would be better if the sum of £50,000 is used to support facilities within the new Garden Community under the terms of their section 106 obligations, it was **agreed** to reject the offer but to request that the consortium instead makes a grant to this Council of £25,000 to support community development work generally with no strings attached i.e. that it does not reduce their obligations under section 106 obligations generally.

**23.24/200: To consider representations in relation to Licencing application relating to Land at Wheeler’s Hill**

The application was considered and it was noted that the original licence did have a limit of 3,000 people but resulted in considerable problems in relation to the management of traffic and parking in the area and also resulted in verge parking with people walking along the fast moving road. Chelmsford City Council thus required a reduction to the current limit of 1,000 people which the applicants are seeking to increase back to the original level. Whereas, the Council does not object to a music festival in principle it was considered that it must be properly managed so as not to place an intolerable burden on the Community. It was particularly noted that the only access to Wheeler’s Hill and thus the site is via Essex Regiment Way and it was considered that an event with a capacity of 3,000 people is too great a capacity to effectively manage the traffic and parking in the area as demonstrated by the previous problems which are thus contrary to public safety. It was therefore **agreed to object** to the application on that basis.

**23.24/201: To consider representations in relation to consultation for a crossing of White Hart Lane.**

The plans were considered and Councillors are pleased to see proposals for a crossing in that position and wish to request that it is constructed at the earliest opportunity.

**23.24/202: Health and Wellbeing issues**

**23.24/202.1 To consider outcomes from Health and Wellbeing discussions and focus group and to consider next steps.**

Councillor Williamson provided an update on the outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing focus group with key stakeholders and the positive response received. The ICB had proposed liaison between this Council and the local neighbourhood team. In order to have a clearer road map to identify what this Council can host or promote and its priorities, it was **agreed** that the Council should host a further forum. The report regarding the meeting between Councillor Wright, the Executive Officer an Chelmsford City Council officers was also noted and it was further noted that an online consultation session to ascertain interest in Park Run has been set up for residents.

**23.24/203: To receive update on development of Youth strategy**

It was noted that the Communications committee had approved the questions for the survey and the issue of which survey platform to use will be a task for the new employee.

**23.24/204: To receive update on liaison with the Police regarding Community Safety.**

The Executive Officer provided a report summarising all the actions that have been taken by this Council to liaise with the Police and consider community safety plus her research into the scheme where Councils can make a payment towards a PCSO for the area. The advantages and disadvantages were discussed and there was concern as to whether it would provide best value for the Community to fund such a scheme, however this is dependent upon costs which are awaited. The Executive Officer was therefore asked to chase up the costing information from the Police and also to enquire as to the possibility of private security patrols so the Council can discuss the issue further. There was also a discussion in relation to the obtaining of crime statistics and the Executive Officer will seek to provide some data for Councillors from the Police and also to enquire with Neighbourhood Watch.

**23.24/205: Open Space issues**

**23.24/205.1 To receive update regarding Bridleway 18**

The proposals received from Essex County Council to upgrade the Bridleway were considered but Councillors considered the plans to be insufficiently clear to fully understand the proposals and the Executive officer was asked to obtain more information to enable the Council to comment.

**23.24/205.2 To receive report in relation to Boreham Airfield War Memorial**

The Executive Officer had carried out a substantial amount of research including liaison with an American Association which appears to show that there is no legal owner of the Memorial although it does stand on highway verge and it is in the Parish of Boreham. Councillors were concerned as to the condition of the Memorial and the importance of maintaining this important asset. The Executive Officer was therefore asked to liaise further with the War Memorial Trust and with Boreham Parish Council with a view to considering its maintenance.

**23.24/206: To consider request for assistance from Bowls Club in relation to internet issues**

Councillor Alderman had received an approach from the Bowls Club who wish to install full fibre internet but are not able to do so as they have not been able to obtain consent from the adjacent land owner. It was noted that the adjacent landowners are Bellway and Marden Homes so contact information can be provided to them when Councillors meet with representatives of the Bowls club this month.

**23.24/207: Any matters for next agenda**

To consider obtaining a credit card for the Council, update regarding liaison with the Chelmsford Garden Community Trust.

Meeting concluded at 21.28pm