

Minutes of the meeting of the Chelmsford Garden Community Council held on 5th September 2024 at 7.30pm at the Beaulieu Community Centre, 17 Centenary Way, Chelmsford, Essex

Present: Councillors Derek Drew-Smith (Chair)

Neil Shah

Joel Alderman

Kuldeep Golla

Brian Jeapes

Daniel Jeffreys

Jed Stopher

Romilly Wakeling

Melanie Williamson

Andrew Wright

Executive Officer Suzanne Walker

County Councillor Mike Mackrory

Three members of the public were present

The Chair welcomed everyone and advised that Chloe Tron had resigned from the Council. He thanked her for her service as she had been involved in both the Shadow Council as well as being a member of this Council and had worked hard for the greater good of this area. She will remain a Chelmsford City Councillor.

24.25/60: Apologies

Received from Councillors Driver and Udoh and from City Councillors Rose Moore, Susan Sullivan and Ian Fuller

24.25/61: Declaration of interests

None

24.25/62: To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 1st August 2024

The minutes of the meeting of 1st August 2024 were **agreed** by all Councillors and signed by the Chair.

24.25/63: Community question time

A member of the public complained about Health and Safety in relation to contractors working on the new footpaths and cars driving along paths that are not for motor vehicles. The resident had previously been advised to contact the Health and Safety Executive but he advised that they had declined to act. The Executive Officer was asked to ring the HSE to enquire in what circumstances they may take action. The resident also complained about the Fire Risk of the area of grass known as The Wedge.

Another resident complained about graffiti in the Springfield and Chelmsford City Centre areas. He was advised of how to report the issue online as these areas are outside of this Parish.

24.25/64: To receive the following Reports

24.25/64.1 Report from County Councillor

Councillor Mackrory reported that following a delay, work on the White Hart Lane crossing is expected to start on 7th October and there may be some night closures. He is also making enquiries in relation to possible traffic calming measures for White Hart Lane.

A question was asked about a recent cycle consultation and Councillor Mackrory advised that the recent proposals are not as yet funded but a more detailed cycle strategy is being developed.

24.25/64.2 Report from City Councillor

None present

24.25/64.3 Report from Councillors regarding attendance at external meetings

Councillor Jeffries advised that he had attended the bike marking event organised by this Council at Channels which had been successful with around 20 people attending to have their bikes marked.

24.25/64.4 Executive Officer report

The Executive Officer reported that the portrait of the King has now been hung in the foyer of the Community Centre and reminded Councillors of a date for training later in September. She also provided an update regarding information provided by the South Essex Parking Partnership that the consultation in relation not parking restrictions for the Channels area will be launched imminently and will be publicised on the Council's website to make residents aware of the importance of making their views known. Information about pending traffic restrictions will be provided to Councillors. It has been noted by the South Essex Parking Partnership that George Wicks Way and Staines Drive are both to remain private roads and will not be adopted as public highway. They will therefore not be included in the current consultation process in relation to parking restrictions.

24.25/65: Committee Reports

The draft minutes of the meeting of the planning committee that took place on 8th August 2024 were **noted**.

24.25/66: Financial report

24.25/66.1 To receive the bank reconciliation statement

The bank reconciliation statement calculated to 31st August 2024 was **noted and accepted**.

24.25/66.2 To receive report and approve money received and paid

The following payments were **noted and approved**:

Receipts	£	VAT	Total
9/8/24	VAT refund		3,527.22
16/8/24	CGC Trust		3,399.75

**Payments made since last meeting in accordance with annual schedule
On 21st August 2024**

Salaries and expenses				4,096.36
HMRC (PAYE August)				1,299.31
Essex Pension Fund (August)				1,639.75
CGC Trust (August meetings)	110.84	22.16	133.00	

Direct Debits

9th August 2024 Unity Trust credit card:

Amazon (projector)	54.00			
Viking stationary	84.82			
Monthly fee	<u>3.00</u>			141.82

29/8/24 EE mobile phones	29.10	5.82	34.92	
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Payments to be made

Channels room hire for training session	83.33	16.67	100.00	
PKF Littlejohn external audit	630.00	126.00	756.00	
Chelmsford City Council play in the park fee	540.00	0.00	540.00	
CGC Trust meetings (September)	110.01	21.99	132.00	

It was noted that the Direct debit in relation to payments to CGC Trust has now been cancelled and payments are now being made via online banking.

24.25/66.3 To note the outcome of the External Audit

It was **noted** that the External Audit has been completed and that a clear audit has been received with no caveats or requirements and the Executive Officer was thanked for her work. The notice of conclusion of audit will now be displayed.

24.25/66.4 To appoint the External auditor for financial year 2024/2025

It was noted that this item should have been to appoint an internal auditor so an agenda item to appoint the internal auditor will be added to the October agenda.

24.25/67: To consider quotation for support from Work Nest

The services on offer from work nest were noted to be very comprehensive. However due to the cost and the fact that there is HR support available from other sources free of charge, such as NALC and ACAS it was considered that the quote was extremely expensive and would not be value for money whilst this Council has

just two employees. Consideration of any HR support can be considered at some point in the future if considered necessary. It was **agreed** not to proceed with the quote and to take no further action at this point in time.

24.25/68: To consider open space issues

24.25/68.1 To receive feedback on the outcome of the complaint to Chelmsford City Council in relation to The Wedge.

It was noted that this Council had raised the issue of the Wedge with the Chief Executive Officer of Chelmsford City Council who had replied that the treatment of that area is in accordance with agreed Council policy. It was **accepted** that there is no further action available to this Council. Residents again spoke to express their concerns over the potential fire risk. It was noted that this Council had worked hard but had not been able to broker an acceptable solution for the residents. The residents indicated that they may form their own pressure group in this regard.

It was noted that there is a volunteer scheme to assist with vegetation management in Boleyn Gardens which this Council will promote and that schools will be invited to assist with bulb planting.

One option for future consideration is whether the Wedge area may be suitable for public art works or sculptures.

24.25/68.2 To consider issues of concern in relation to lighting in the Parish.

Councillor Stopher raised a concern that the streetlights in the area switch off at 1am and that this has an impact in relation to the perception of crime. It was explained that in relation to lights adopted by Essex Highways this has been the policy for many years and Councillor Mackrory advised that there is no likelihood of it being changed at this point in time as the County Council are aiming to be carbon neutral and turning off the lights also has the economic benefit of saving money so **agreed** no further action will be taken in relation to the issue.

24.25/68.3 To consider issues of signage and parking at Beaulieu boulevard

A resident had complained to Councillor Jeffries that motorists are not respecting the mini roundabout at the bottom of Frances Green and consider that it is dangerous and would like signage erected. It was noted that the area is a 20mph zone which is set up to avoid excessive street furniture. However the Executive Officer was requested to approach Essex County Council and find out if a local Highway Panel application would have any likelihood of success.

Complaints had also been received regarding a bus regularly parking by the same mini roundabout and whereas it was noted that future parking restrictions may prevent this, information will be provided to the Executive Officer so she can ascertain if this is a matter that could be considered by DVLA as a breach of regulations as it is a larger vehicle.

24.25/68.4 To receive update in relation to Waymarking issues at Channels Park.

It was noted that advice had been received that an application can only be made to the Local Highway Panel in relation to signage on adopted roads. As adoption is

imminent in the area, the Executive Officer was asked to enquire whether such an application may be submitted at this point in time.

24.25/68.5 To receive feedback from Play in the Park sessions and to consider if to again host the event during 2025

It was noted that the summer sessions were very popular and Councillors **agreed** to host Play in the Park in 2025 and to look to again book extras for the event.

24.25/69: To agree representations in relation to the draft Stewardship statement from the development consortium.

The draft stewardship statement had been considered at length at two working group meetings and the Executive Officer had drafted a response to Chelmsford City Council to express the views and representations of the Council in relation to the proposals. The statement was considered and **agreed** by all Councillors.

24.25/70: To receive an update from the Health and Wellbeing working group

There had been a working group discussion and in addition an online meeting had been arranged with the integrated care board regarding the new Beaulieu Health centre. It was noted that a provider has been found and once the ICB are able they will provide communications to this Council to advise of the identity of the provider and when the centre is likely to open. It was noted that there is likely to be a large demand for services and that there will be further liaison with the ICB regarding future health needs of the community. It was noted that it will be for the providers to decide if to offer any services over and above basic GP provision such as physiotherapy and social prescribing.

It was also noted that a club has been set up for men's health locally to provide not just exercise but a social outlet.

Councillor Stopher had made some enquiries in relation to defibrillators in the Parish and the information will be discussed at the next working group meeting with a view to providing recommendations as to next steps to Council.

24.25/71: To consider recommendations from the Youth Working Group

It was noted that the Executive Officer had obtained information about a street art project aimed at reducing graffiti and it was **agreed** to make further enquiries as to its viability locally. It was noted the youth survey is ready to launch but due to costs, the Executive Officer was asked to obtain prices of survey provisions with mailchimp and Canva to compare to the Survey Monkey costs and to bring this back to the next meeting for consideration.

24.25/72: To consider recommendations from the IT Working group

It was noted that the Executive Officer is offering further training to familiarise Councillors with the Zoho system. It was also noted that the Parish online system is no longer a free subscription and to consider over the next few months if the subscription is cost effective prior to renewal in July 2025.

24.25/73: To consider any representations in relation to the Essex County Council Transport Strategy

Agreed no comments.

24.25/74: To receive update in relation to Community Safety issues

Concerns had been expressed to Councillor Wakeling in relation to women's safety and it was agreed to as the Community safety working group to consider ideas that could assist women to feel safe in the Community and report back to Council. It was noted that there is the possibility of organising women's self defence classes and Krav Maga locally.

24.25/75: To consider Matters relating to the management of the Community Centre and liaison with Chelmsford Garden Community Trust

It was noted that the handover from the previous Treasurer to the Trustees of the Trust has now been completed and that another liaison meeting will be taking place next week so there will be an update provided at the next meeting.

24.25/76: To agree any amendments to list of Councillor responsibilities

Further to the resignation of Councillor Tron, it was **agreed** by all Councillors that she is removed as a signatory from both Unity Trust accounts and from the account with Cambridge Building Society. It was **agreed** to add Councillors Jeapes and Alderman to those accounts.

It was also **agreed** to appoint Councillor Williamson as the representative from this Council to the Chelmsford Association of Local Councils.

Also, Councillor Wright asked to be involved in the working group in relation to new buildings. After discussion, as this is a matter relating to future stewardship it was agreed to bring discussions in relation to any new community buildings into the Stewardship working group of which Councillor Wright is already a member. Other than the removal of Councillor Tron from the committees and working groups of which she is a member, the list of responsibilities was **agreed**.

24.25/77: Any matters for next agenda

None.

Meeting concluded at 9.30pm

DRAFT