

# **Chignal Parish Council**

C/O 45 Cherry Garden Road, Great Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 1DH

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Clerk: Will Adshead-Grant

Chair: Lynn Ballard

Website: [e-voice.org.uk/Chignal-Parish](http://e-voice.org.uk/Chignal-Parish)

Vice Chair: Linda Nelson

The minutes of the Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Chignal Parish Council held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at **7.00**

## **Governance**

### 2023/678 Chairman's Welcome.

The sad news of the passing of Steve Middleditch who was a parish councillor for 6 years. He was our Broadband Champion and the whole community benefitted from Steve's skills as a graphic designer: the Parish Plan, Welcome booklet, display panels and a host of eye-catching posters for village events are all testament to his creative flair.

Chair: Ballard.

Cllrs: Elwick, Lewis, Stainton, Towns and Nelson.

### 2023/679 Apologies for Absence

None required.

### 2023/680 Register of Declarations of Interests and any requests for dispensation

None requested.

### 2023/681 Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 08 01 2024.

**Resolution: The minutes were confirmed.**

### 2023/682 Note the Orchard sub-Committee minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**Resolution: The minutes were noted.**

### 2023/683 Note the Orchard sub-Committee minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Resolution: The minutes were noted.**

### 2023/684 Public Open Session for any matters that need to be drawn to the Parish Council's attention.

5 members of the public.

- Minerals plan – Does Essex County Council have a view of the plan?  
Essex County Council are currently reviewing the sites on an individual basis. Once the plan has been approved, each site will be reviewed again when a planning application is submitted.

### 2023/685 County and City Councillors' Reports

#### i. Essex County Councillor Report – Cllr Mike Steel.

#### **ECC report for Parish Council Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> March**

##### **Member Led pothole scheme:**

All of my 39 (of the 36 allocations from 2023) have been completed. Four of these were in your parish. Unfortunately, the passing place which I got repaired on Chignal Road has been filled in by someone. I have enquired as to whether this constitutes fly-tipping but have been told that it is not an official passing place, so filling it in is not fly-tipping.

The only thing left to do is for the PC to approach the landowner and ask him to reinstate the passing place! There will be a new scheme starting April 2024, but this will be expanded and include pavements and other defects. It is being funded by an £8M grant from Central Govt which has to be spread over 75 ECC divisions. I have already received numerous requests for defects to be addressed. I won't be able to do all the pavements and carriageway potholes, so will need to make priority decisions.

I arranged for Highways to return to Woodhall Road to instal a 20-25mm upstand water check at the dropped kerb near the Pig and Whistle. a water checks. This was necessary because the resurfacing of the road lifted it above a drop kerb into a garden. This has reinstated to the previous position.

## **LHP**

All LHP meetings have been delayed until April pending new processes and budgets.

A number of schemes had been delayed from last year (wending March 23) to this year. Despite numerous requests to get a progress report on those planned schemes, I have not been able to get an answer. I have escalated to the Highways Cabinet Member.

### **National Grid ESO Report**

I attended the Electricity System Operator's (ESO) East Anglia 4th March presentation on the outcomes of their study for alternative routes. This considered 9 options in total including offshore, buried, onshore pylons and hybrids. The options were compared in terms of:

1. Environmental Impact
2. Community Impact
3. Deliverability (e.g., planning considerations, operations)
4. Economics – Capex cost, lifetime costs compared with cheapest option.

All options were assessed for 2034 delivery for comparison purposes.

No option achieved a clean slate – i.e., no silver bullet.

Assessment was done at high level.

The study will be published this week.

### **Transport Safety Officer pilot launched in Essex.**

Essex County Council and partners have launched a pilot Transport Safety Officer (TSOs) initiative in Essex. This follows a successful joint bid by Essex County Council, Thurrock Council and Southend-on-Sea City Council to the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of their national roll out of the scheme. £490,000 was awarded for the scheme in Essex.

The introduction of specially trained officers aims to make public transport in the county safer. The officers will deal with low-level nuisance and disorder, tackle Violence Against Women and Girls and target hotspot routes and locations on public transport. They will also possess enforcement powers, including the authority to issue fixed penalty notices for specific anti-social behaviours.

The initiative aligns with broader government commitments to enhance public transport services. Read more about [the Transport Safety Officers initiative](#)

### **Recycling centre bookings made permanent across Essex.**

*Essex County Council has made recycling centre bookings permanent following public consultation.*

A booking process trialled across recycling centres managed by Essex County Council has been made permanent following positive feedback from residents.

A full evaluation of the booking trial is available at <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/essex-recycling-centre-vehicle-bookings/>

To find out more information or to book a slot, visit [www.lovesessex.org/bookings](http://www.lovesessex.org/bookings)

- ii. Chelmsford City Councillor Report - Cllr Nicolette Chambers .  
No report was available.

## **Planning**

2023/686 Planning Updates:

- Essex Minerals Local Plan Review – Public consultation running to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

### **Replacement Minerals Local Plan: Consultation Response on RMLP Policies**

Section 3.0 The Strategy – Aims, Strategic Objectives and Spatial Priorities

3.1 Spatial Vision, Table 1

h) Restoration and After-use

“Restoration and after-use schemes will continue to be integral to site selection and the consideration of planning applications, with progressive working and restoration schemes expected. Where working is proposed on the best and most versatile agricultural land, restoration schemes should show, where practicable, how the methods used in the restoration and aftercare enable the land to retain its longer-term capability for agriculture.”

#### **Comments**

The extraction area of Candidate Site A91 is Grade 2 agricultural land. It is stated in the Site Assessments that the quarry will be in-filled with inert waste but there is no information on the proposed after-use.

Furthermore, there is no indication of how restoration and after-care would enable the land to retain its longer-term capability for agriculture. Given the lack of information on restoration and after-use, which is integral to site selection, Site A91 cannot be considered as a potential minerals site. It should be excluded from the Preferred Sites.

### Policy S1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

“The Mineral Planning Authority will take a positive approach to minerals development that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure minerals development that improves the economic, social, and environmental conditions in the area.”

#### Comments

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises the importance of protecting the best and most versatile agricultural soils, (para. 178). Extraction of sand and gravel on Grade 2 agricultural land cannot be considered to be “sustainable development” as this valuable finite resource could never be restored to be the “best and most versatile land”. There are ample examples of poor restoration to agriculture at the former Brittons Hall and Roxwell sand and gravel quarries in Chignal parish and in the neighbouring parish of Roxwell.

### Policy S2 - Strategic Priorities for Minerals Development

“2. Ensuring there are no unacceptable adverse impacts arising from proposed minerals development for public health and wellbeing, public safety, amenity, the quality of life of nearby communities, and the environment;”

#### Comments

There need to be specific criteria for assessing whether the adverse impacts of mineral extraction on rural communities are “unacceptable.” In the tranquil and quiet countryside of Chignal St James, the noise and dust from gravel extraction and the subsequent restoration of the Brittons Hall and Roxwell quarries was highly disruptive and certainly considered to be “unacceptable” by local residents and by visitors from nearby Chelmsford who seek peace and relaxation by walking, cycling and horse riding on our lanes and public rights of way and using our public open spaces. Site A91, including the proposed conveyor, is located in the heart of Chignal St James, close to dwellings and village amenities: the Village Hall, Playing Field, Community Orchard, St Nicholas Church, and The Green. The quality of life, health, safety, amenity and environment of residents and anyone using these village amenities would be affected unacceptably by gravel extraction at Site A91.

### Policy S10 - Protecting and Enhancing the Environment and Local Amenity

“Applications for minerals development shall demonstrate that appropriate consideration has been given to public health, wellbeing and safety, amenity, quality of life of nearby communities, and the natural, built, and historic environment. Appropriate mitigation measures shall be included in the proposed scheme of development to ensure that no unacceptable adverse impacts would arise. Applications shall also demonstrate that opportunities have been taken to improve and enhance the environment and amenity, and to deliver a net gain in biodiversity, as an outcome of final restoration.”

#### Comments

No amount of mitigation can reduce the impact of living close to a mineral extraction site.

### Policy S11 - Access and Transportation

“Where the movement of minerals are by road, HGV movements shall not generate unacceptable impacts on highways safety, highways capacity and air quality (particularly in relation to any potential breaches of National Air Quality Objectives and impacts on any Air Quality Management Areas).”

“Considering any mitigation measures proposed, minerals development shall not cause:

- a) Unacceptable physical impacts on the highway network (e.g. kerbside or road damage); b) Unacceptable risks to the safety of pedestrians and road users”

#### Comments

More weight should be given to the safety issues around HGVs using narrow rural roads which are used extensively by walkers, cyclists, and horse riders, especially near to urban population centres. The grass verges on these rural lanes are now managed to encourage wildflowers and can be easily and carelessly damaged by HGVs.

### Policy S12 – Mineral Site Restoration and After-Use

“ 3.213 The PPG states that “Where working is proposed on the best and most versatile agricultural land the outline strategy should show, where practicable, how the methods used in the restoration and aftercare enable the land to retain its longer-term capability, though the proposed after-use need not always be for agriculture.”<sup>18</sup>. Likewise, the NPPF requires restoration and safeguarding of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and to provide for the conservation of soil resources. “

“b. In the case of minerals development affecting the best and most versatile agricultural land, the land is capable of being restored back to best and most versatile agricultural land, though the proposed after-use need not always be for agriculture;”

Comments

There can be no justification for allowing mineral extraction on Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land. This is a finite resource which once subjected to excavation for gravel, can never be restored to its former soil quality.

Policy DM1 – Development Management Criteria

2. The health and wellbeing of local residents, as well as the wider community, who could be impacted by operation of the development.

Comments

The impact on the mental health of local residents from disturbance due to gravel and restoration operations should be a development management criterion.

“5.26 Mineral development in the countryside should pay particular regard to the local landscape and should aim to protect and enhance this, including through restoration and after-use. The Landscape Character Assessments undertaken by the local planning authorities should be used by developers to inform the design and working programmes of their mineral proposals.”

Comments

The Local Character Assessments should be given more weight in the assessment and selection of mineral sites.

“5.43 Minerals development, especially primary extraction, can have a significant impact upon the environment and on communities. This impact can be magnified if there are a number of permissions granted for mineral development within close proximity, or if permission to extract is extended, resulting in many years of mining activity in one location.”

Comments

Chignal parish has been blighted by sand and gravel extraction and then landfill operations for over 70 years. As restoration of the Brittons Hall and Roxwell quarries is nearing the end, no further mineral extraction should be permitted in this area.

**Replacement Minerals Local Plan: Consultation Response on the Site Assessments**

Detailed comments were also considered on the methodology and criteria used to assess the 52 Candidate Sites and on the assessment and RAG grading of Site A91 in Chignal St James.

**Resolution: The Parish Council supports the submission of the RMLP consultation response**

- Planning enforcement from CCC, (see Item 694).

2023/687 Planning Applications:

Reference ↕	Address ↕	Type ↕	Status ↕
18/00001/MAS	Land North Of Warren House Roxwell Road Writtle Chelmsford Essex	Application	Pending Decision
21/01545/OUT	Land North Of Warren House Roxwell Road Writtle Chelmsford Essex	Application	Pending Consideration

**Finance**

2023/688 Implementation of community projects – consider feedback from residents / clubs / groups.

- Gazebos, (see Item 689).
- Items for the Orchard (Ladder, kneelers, and some equipment) – this has been funded.
- Pétanque court taster sessions.
- Village Hall development items still being discussed.

2023/689 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Consider applications for funding community projects.

- Gazebos for the Village Fete and other community uses.

**Resolution: Defer the item to next meeting.**

**Resolution: Cllr Towns will lead on this item.**

2023/690 Chignal welcome / information booklet – consider updating and re printing in 2024.

The new website is being launched with up-to-date information that will need to be kept updated. Suggestions for an A3 sheet, folded to A6, rather than a booklet with signposts to the website for more information.

**Resolution: Cllr Ballard to work with the Community Group to prepare an example of the A3 sheet.**

2023/691 Finance:

Account Balances:

<b><u>Cheque Account</u></b>	£	<b><u>8,081.66</u></b>
<b><u>Orchard Account</u></b>	£	<b><u>1,191</u></b> (Included in cheque account)
<b><u>Saving Account</u></b>	£	<b><u>44,092.46</u></b>

- Interest £161.65 to transfer to current account
- General Reserve £21,280.21
- Cil £22,650.25

**Resolution: The accounts were noted.**

2023/692 To approve the following payments:

08.01.24	Essex pension fund - January	£166.43	salary
03.01.24	ICO - DD	£35.00	IT & Web
19.01.24	Cllr Ballard-Kneelers	£173.89	CILs
19.01.24	Cllr Ballard - Ladder	£259.00	CILs
15.02.24	AE Simmons - Walks guide	£145.00	CILs
15.03.2024	Cllr Ballard - Orchard Rakes	£107.50	Orchard
15.03.2024	HMRC PAYE - JANUARY	£47.80	salary
15.03.2024	DM Payroll	£60.00	salary
15.03.2024	CLERK SALARY & EXPENSES - JANUARY	£197.75	salary
15.03.2024	Essex Pension Fund - Feb	£165.43	salary
15.03.2024	HMRC PAYE - February	£47.80	salary
15.03.2024	CLERK SALARY & EXPENSES - February	£191.45	salary
15.03.2024	Essex Pension Fund - March	£165.43	salary
15.03.2024	HMRC PAYE - March	£47.80	salary
15.03.2024	CLERK SALARY & EXPENSES - March	£197.75	salary
15.03.2024	Jcm - Hedge Cutting	£288.00	Orchard
15.03.2024	EALC	£90.00	training
15.03.2024	Cllr - Ballard - brush & pans	£36.77	Orchard
15.03.2024	re issue payment parishioner	£267.20	Reserve
15.03.2024	Village Hall	£120.00	Hall Hires

**Total** £ **2,810.00**

**Resolution: The Payments were reviewed and approved.**

2023/693 Review of the Bi-monthly bank reconciliation

**Resolution: The Cash book was passed with no issues.**

## **REPORTS AND UPDATES**

2023/694 Representatives' Reports: to discuss and debate any items.

- Little Hollows / Copperfield Place Liaison - Cllr Elwick
  - Completion of Copperfield Place landscaping work
  - Update from CCC Planning enforcement.
    - i. Landscaping has still not been actioned by Persimmon since 2022.
- Playing Field - Cllr Elwick and Cllr Towns
  - Hedge cut by JCM.
- Village Hall Liaison - Cllr Towns.
  - No report due to time constraints.
- Community Engagement - Cllr Nelson
  - Community laptop – cabinets being sourced.
  - Parish website launch.
    - i. Ready to launch.
    - ii. Release notes to be prepared by Cllr Nelson.
  - Chignal News – proposed new format, content, frequency, and circulation.
    - i. No report due to time constraints.
- Community Safety – Cllr Lewis
  - Update on options for siting and managing a Defibrillator in Chignal Smealey.
    - i. United Reformed Church: advice given on potential funders.
  - Love your Parish Day
  - Anti-Litter Road Signs.
    - i. Chelmsford City Council has no evidence that these make any difference.
  - Clock Stock Festival at Boyton Hall Farm: meeting to be arranged with organiser.
- Highways (include Hedges) - Cllr Towns
  - Update on LHP funding for village entry gates.
  - Road Flooded – Update on clearing blocked road drains.
  - Directional sign to Chignal Smealey: Hollow Lane/Chignal Road junction
    - i. No report due to time constraints.
- Footpaths/Bridleways – Cllr Nelson and Cllr Towns
  - No report due to time constraints.
- Tree Warden - Cllr Ballard
  - No report due to time constraints.
- Countryside Conservation.
  - No report due to time constraints.

2023/695      Items for the next Agenda

Due to time constraints, items to be e-mailed to the Clerk.

Meeting Closed: 20:05  
 Will Adshead-Grant  
 Clerk to the Council.

**Next meetings:**

Monday 13th	May 2024	Monthly Meeting and AGM
Monday 8th	July 2024	Monthly Meeting
Monday 9th	September 2024	Monthly Meeting
Monday 11th	November 2024	Monthly Meeting