

**Minutes of the meeting of the
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE
held on Monday 7th April 2025 at 8:15pm
in the Rochford Day Centre, 33a Back Lane, Rochford**

Cllrs present: Chair A MacPherson, L Fane, R Gardner, T Hargrave, Mrs L Massey, S May, & Mrs M Weir.

Also present: Cllr Miss M Ward

P 25/58 Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:

All Members were present.

P 25/59 Declarations of any:

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;

b) Other Registrable Interest; or

on any matter on the agenda for 7th April 2025:

Cllr Mrs L Massey declared an interest by virtue of her spouse being Council's regular contractor.

P 25/60 Public Forum:

No public were present.

P 25/61 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2025 and to approve the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting:

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 10th February 2025 were **approved** as a correct record and Members approved the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

P 25/62 Financial Report – March 2025:

There were no questions and Members **accepted** the Financial Report.

P 25/63 Action List Update – February 2025:

25/63.1 The Clerk had chased the Church for a response but had received no formal reply. Members questioned why a response from the Church was needed. The Clerk reminded Members the idea had been to acquire the land so it could be given to the Church in the future for grave space. Members felt it would be prudent to acquire the land, regardless of the Church's requirements to save it from any potential housing developments.

The Clerk reminded Members that the area would need to be fenced off for a period of 12 years and that the public would not be allowed into the space which had been a community space for a long time. It was noted Council had provided benches in the space; Members suggested these should be removed after the fencing was erected.

Members instructed the Clerk to re-explore the legalities for Adverse Possession; it was agreed she would need to contact another suitable solicitor to start the process again. The Clerk reminded Members they had not budgeted for any works relating to Adverse Possession and that monies may need to be vired from the General Reserves.

25/63.2 The Clerk had recontacted RDC about the water leak into the Nature Reserve and had received no response. Members felt the Clerk should escalate the matter. A Member suggested the water be tested and if shown to be contaminated the issue raised with the

local MP. The Clerk would continue to pursue the matter and would attempt to contact the Environment Agency (EA) to see if she could find out their progress.

- 25/63.3 The concrete surfacing works had been carried out. A Member enquired if eco-concrete had been used. The Clerk informed Members she had requested eco-concrete but was unsure if it had been used.
- 25/63.4 Items in the Eco-Audit report have been referred to a new Working Group reporting to the GP Committee to work through.
- 25/63.5 The Lincoln Road fencing repair works had been carried out. Members agreed to close the item.
- 25/63.6 Hullbridge Parish Council would be undertaking the Glencroft Open Spaces cut imminently.
- 25/63.7 The Clerk would progress some of the low-level Annual Playground inspection works during the next few months.

It was **resolved** that Members noted and accepted the Action Update List and agreed to the removal of the closed items.

P 25/64 Email from gate openers at Magnolia Park:

Members noted the length of service from the resident and felt it was important to make sure any improvements to the opening times signage appeased them. Members discussed various options for better signage and agreed the times for closing were ambiguous when it came to just 'summer and 'winter' and that the clock changes often caused issues with people thinking they could park for longer given the lighter evenings.

Cllr T Hargrave left the Chambers at 8:48pm.

It was **agreed** the resident be contacted and asked for their opinion for best signage options and Council would act on their advice.

Cllr T Hargrave returned to the Chambers at 8:50pm.

Cllr Mrs L Massey left the Chambers at 8:57pm

P 25/65 Request from a 'Geocacher' – Magnolia Nature Reserve:

Members noted a similar request had been made before from another resident.

It was **agreed** in principle that a geocache be placed in Magnolia Nature Reserve. The Clerk would contact the resident to ascertain the placement of the geocache and given it would not cause harm or issue to the natural environment, permission would be granted.

Cllr Mrs L Massey returned to Chambers at 8:59pm

P 25/66 Summary of decisions:

- Clerk to restart process for Adverse Possession; to find a suitable solicitor. Council to attempt to register the land regardless of Church's response.
- Clerk to continue to chase RDC regarding the water leak into Magnolia Nature Reserve; the Clerk to attempt to contact the EA also to ascertain progress.
- Gate opener for Magnolia Park to be contacted and asked for their opinion on signage for gate closure times; Council to act on their advice.
- Geocache permission granted in principle; Clerk to contact resident to find out location of geocache.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Chair