

**Minutes of the meeting of the
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE
held on Monday 8th September 2025 at 9:15pm
in the Rochford Day Centre, 33a Back Lane, Rochford**

Cllrs present: Chair A MacPherson, L Fane, R Gardner (until 9:27pm), Mrs L Massey, S May, Miss M Ward & Mrs M Weir.

Also present: Three members of the public.

P 25/24 Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:
Apologies had been received from Cllr T Hargrave.

P 25/25 Declarations of any:
a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;
b) Other Registrable Interest; or
on any matter on the agenda for 8th September 2025:
Cllr Mrs L Massey declared an interest by virtue that her spouse was a regular contractor for Council.
Members **accepted** the declarations made.

P 25/26 Public Forum:
Three members of the public were present (P1-P3). No questions were raised at this section.

P 25/27 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2025 and to approve the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting:
The Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th July 2025 were **approved** as a correct record and Members approved the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

P 25/28 Financial Report – August 2025:
There were no questions and Members **accepted** the Financial Report.

P 25/29 Action List Update – September 2025:
25/29.1 Members were referred to Agenda item 7 (Minute F25/30).
25/29.2 There was no updates regarding the water leak into Magnolia Nature Reserve; the Clerk had not had time to follow the matter up. Cllr L Fane had forwarded a water expert contact at Essex County Council he had employed at his residence; it was noted his services may incur a fee.
P1 enquired if the leak was from a septic tank.
25/29.3 Two sets of car park closure signs had been installed; the remainder were due to be installed imminently. A Member raised concerns that the signs which had been installed were not bright enough; the Clerk assured that the two signs to be installed were a lot more prominent.
25/29.4 The Clerk was still trying to source a window cleaner for the solar panels. Cllr L Fane volunteered to clean the panels.
25/29.5 Members noted the update from the police. Members suggest cameras be installed in April ahead of the crime, having noted the annual pattern of criminal activity.
25/29.6 The Magnolia car park tree works had been carried out.
25/29.7 Members were referred to Agenda item 10 (Minute FC25/33).

25/29.8 A site visit to Spencers Park had been carried out with two contractors to look at the path resurfacing works. One quote was still due.
It was **resolved** that Members noted and accepted the Action Update List and agreed to the removal of the closed items.
Cllr R Gardner left the meeting at 9:27pm.

P 25/30 Church Strop Adverse Possession (AP) – email from solicitor:

It was noted a solicitor would not be able to offer any assistance until an application for AP was made. The Clerk informed Members two estimates for fencing works were due and that the budget would need to be assessed accordingly. The Clerk requested guidance for the type of fencing required; a site visit would be arranged.

P1 enquired if the public would be allowed access should the area be fenced off.

P 25/31 Magnolia car park:

a) Car park lining quotes: Members noted a difference in the number of bays across quotes and the Clerk would check this accordingly.

It was **agreed** to engage Reliant Leisure Services at a cost of £2,177.92, noting previous works had been of a high standard.

b) Footpath repair works required adjacent to Magnolia main pond and boggy area beyond: It was noted quotes were due.

c) Consider addition of children's games in Magnolia playground: It was **agreed** that a site visit with Reliant Leisure be arranged to discuss design ideas for painted games in Magnolia playground. All Members indicated that they would like to attend the meeting.

P 25/32 Magnolia Nature Reserve – badger issues:

Members noted the Clerk's report. It was noted BR35 may need to be diverted where the badger sett was. More would be known following the Essex County Council's Public Rights of Way (ProW) Officer's meeting on the 17th September.

P 25/33 3-year Tree Survey.

a) Email from report provider: Members noted the report. Members felt a summary report would have been beneficial. The office would provide an overall summary in terms of number of trees to be felled, removed etc.

It was further noted that a recommendation from the Arboricultural Consultant was that the tree survey should be carried out every 18 months. The Clerk would obtain necessary costs.

b) Tree survey report: The report was noted. It was noted Council's regular contractor would carry out the high priority works (within 90 days) where possible. For works outside of their scope, another contractor would need to be engaged.

P 25/34 Items for consideration from Cllr Mrs M Ward:

Cllr Miss Ward suggested the Spencer Park sign be replaced with an informative sign, noting it would be good to appreciate the history of the park. Members also suggested information about Council's other parks and open spaces be included. It was **agreed** the history of the park(s) be researched and ideas to be brought back to the Parks Committee next meeting.

Members **agreed** the seats in Spencers required a concrete footing as the rain pooled under and around the seats making them almost unusable.

It was **agreed** a site visit be carried out to look at the Magnolia Park Adult Gym to ascertain whether the area would need to be fenced off to stop dogs from urinating around the equipment.

P 25/35 Summary of Decisions:

- Site visit required for Church Strip to ascertain type of fencing. Budget consideration for works required.
- Reliant Leisure to carry out Magnolia car park lining work; Clerk to confirm number of bays.
- Parks Committee to meet with Reliant Leisure for site visit to discuss children painted games idea for Magnolia Park playground.
- Office to produce Tree Survey summary report.
- Clerk to investigate costs of 18m tree survey.
- Council's regular contractor to carry out 90day tree survey works; any works outside their scope to be carried out by another contractor.
- History of Spencers Park and Council's other parks/open spaces to be researched; proposal for sign to be presented at next Committee meeting.
- Spencers Park seating to have concrete pads installed.
- Site visit required for Magnolia Adult Gym to ascertain whether fencing is required to deter dogs from urinating around the equipment.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 10:00pm.

Chair