Springfield Parish Council
Minutes of the Full Council Meeting
The Council met at 7pm on **Monday 1st July 2024** in the Council Chamber, Springfield Parish Centre, St Augustine's Way, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 6GX.

Councillor I Fuller chaired the meeting.
Present: Councillors K Hine, A Chong, E Aluko, S Sullivan, J Pioli, G Brazendale, B Chadwick, D Havell.
In attendance- Clerk to the Council, Clare Milligan, the Administration and Committee Clerk, Maisie Kingston, and two members of the public.

028/24. Apologies for Absence
Apologies were received and agreed for Cllr R Carson. Cllrs R Lee, S Byrne-Lagrue and N Dudley were not present at the meeting.

029/24. Declarations of interest
None.

030/24. Minutes
Minutes were received and agreed for the Annual Council Meeting on the 20th May 2024. Cllr I Fuller signed and dated.

031/24. Public Question Time
A member of the public spoke about difficulties their group has with parking for their hire on a Friday afternoon. They discussed how the car park gets full very quickly which makes it difficult for members of the group to park. They also remarked that most of their members are of a certain age. The Clerk informed the members of the public that their concern will be taken to the Premises Committee Meeting on Monday 15th May 2024 for discussion.

032/24. Minutes of Committee meetings
The following minutes were received and noted, with no further comments:
Premises Committee meeting held on 28th May 2024.
Planning and Environment meeting held on 10th June 2024.
Finance and Policy meeting held on 3rd June 2024.

033/24. Clerk's Report
The Clerk updated the council on the following:
1. Village Sign – This should be removed by the end of July 2024.
2. HMRC payment – This item was on the Finance and Policy Committee meeting agenda on 3rd June 2024 and the amount owed to HMRC has now been paid.
3. End of Year Accounts – The accounts have all been submitted to the external auditor.
4. Correspondence re a crossing in Pump Lane – The Clerk advised the resident to contact the County Councillor directly.
5. Insurance- All insurances have been renewed.

034/24. Direct Debits for Financial Year 2024/25
The following direct debits were agreed for the financial year 2024/25:
Proposed by Cllr K Hine, seconded by Cllr D Havell and agreed unanimously.
PWLB – Twice a year £8,000 plus interest.
Information Commissioner – Annually - £55
Anglia Water – twice a year – various amounts
HMRC – Quarterly – Various amounts
Vodafone Mobile Phones – Monthly – various
Peninsula HR consultants – Monthly - £300.73
Barclaycard Commercial – Monthly – various amounts
Allstar fuel card – various times – various amounts
Eazipay Ltd Forest Comms Ltd landline – monthly – various amounts
Tomato Energy – Electricity supplier – monthly – various amounts
Chelmsford City Council – rates – Monthly - £1,734.
The following monthly payment for the salaries was also agreed for the year. This is not a direct debit but has to be paid before the Council meets to agree the payments each month.
J M Payroll – monthly salaries in the region of £27,000 a month.

035/24. Financial Regulations 2024/25
The Financial Regulations for the financial year 2024/25 were received and agreed. Proposed by Cllr A Chong, seconded by Cllr D Havell and agreed unanimously.

036/24. Financial Transactions
The financial transactions for the month of June 2024 were received and agreed for payment. Proposed by Cllr D Havell, seconded by Cllr K Hine and agreed unanimously.

037/24. Financial Review
The bank reconciliations for May and June 2024 were not available and will be brought to the next relevant meeting for agreement.
The Clerk is still pulling the cashflow report together. This will be ready for the next relevant meeting.
The comparison budget report was circulated and agreed.

038/24. Governance Split Financial Working Group
The Council discussed the financial asset split between Springfield Parish Centre and Chelmer Village Council (CVC). Cllr I Fuller informed the Council that CVC had asked for £135,000 to be paid to them out of the reserve. The council agreed in principle that they would offer £135,000 however, CVC must pay half of the loan repayments each year, equalling roughly £8,000. This will be put to CVC, and then agreed at the next Full Council meeting. Proposed by Cllr J Pioli, seconded by Cllr D Havell. With 7 for and 1 abstention the motion was passed.

039/24. Bad Debt

An update was given regarding the ongoing bad debt a previous hirer. The Clerk had been through all paperwork including emails, invoices and payments to work out the amount owed. The total is £944.52. The Council agreed that the Clerk will send a letter to the previous hirer, stating that the council will formalise small claims proceedings if payment is not made for the outstanding amount. Proposed by Cllr J Pioli, seconded by Cllr K Hine. With 7 for and 1 against the motion was passed.

040/24. Mandate Changes as recommended by the Finance and Policies Committee

The following changes were agreed.
Cllrs K Hine, E Aluko and R Lee to be added as signatories to the bank.
Changing on-line banking to three authorisations instead of two.
To stop the automatic transfer of funds from one bank account to another within Lloyds Bank.
Any Councillors to sign the mandate form to make changes to the bank accounts.
Proposed by Cllr B Chadwick, seconded by Cllr A Chong and agreed unanimously.

041/24. IT Infrastructure and Support

The Clerk discussed the current issues with the IT infrastructure within the centre. The WIFI within the building is very poor, causing issues with the staff and their ability to complete day to day tasks due to the connection dipping in and out. This also causes issues with the phones being down on a regular basis which interferes with bookings in particular. The Clerk sought advice from an IT company who quoted for the whole building to be re wired and install new access points. It was also discussed that fibre should be looked into as to how much it would cost to have it accessible to the centre. This will all be taken to the premises meeting on 15th July 2024 for further discussion.
The Clerk had also been investigating the IT Support the Council receives and circulated a support comparison spreadsheet. After an in-depth discussion it was agreed to change contractors to Lodge Information Services/ICE Connect. Proposed by Cllr K Hine, seconded by Cllr J Pioli and agreed unanimously.

042/24. Card Machine

It was agreed at the Finance and Policy Committee meeting on the 3rd June 2024 to cancel the current card machine contract with Barclays and to look for a cheaper alternative. The Clerk had undertaken a comparison investigation and after speaking with Barclays they were able to off an alternative. The contract available is a one-off fee of £29 to purchase a handset and a charge of 1.6% for each transaction. In order to use this type of device a tablet is required. The cost to purchase this is in the region of £350-£400. It was agreed to go with Barclays alternate handset option and purchase the tablet. Proposed by Cllr E Aluko, seconded by Cllr B Chadwick and agreed unanimously.

043/24. Community Engagement

The Council discussed possible ways in which they can engage with the local community. Cllr I Fuller suggested joining with the local litter picking volunteer group or planting bulbs in the local green spaces around Springfield. It was also suggested that the Council write to the Essex Association of Local Councils to try to find out what other councils do. Cllr S Sullivan suggested looking into starting a Youth Group again, with potentially doing this through Essex Children's Services. This will continue to be a discussion point at Full Council meetings.

044/24. Mid and South Essex NHS Trust's Strategy

The Council discussed the strategy and agreed there were no comments as a Parish Council, but councillors were encouraged to make individual comments if they so wished.

045/24. Norwich to Tilbury National Grid Pylon Consultation

The Clerk had previously circulated the email from National Grid. After a discussion and confirmation that the route did not directly affect the area the Council agreed there were no comments to be made.

046/24. Matters for Information

Cllrs E Aluko and K Hine advised they would be attending Councillor training.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.45 pm.

Signed:……………………………….. Chair Dated:……………………………..