**Communications**

1. **Website**

* **Background:**
* **EssexInfo.net**, which is the platform we (and most other Town & Parish Councils, schools and community groups across the county) use for our website and was an **Essex CC** initiative, supported by the **EALC,** is **closing on 31st March 2020** due to the withdrawal of funding by **ECC.**
* A companion platform, **Voice.org** (a national version of EssexInfo.net), has secured funding to continue beyond March 2020 and has confirmed that it is able to provide a free website for any organisation currently using EssexInfo.net.
* **Voice** is free to use and operates using the same software as our current site, which will obviate any need for operator retraining.
* Help is available to transfer our site from one platform to the other and, once this is carried out, we can continue to use our current domain name.
* Hopefully, once set up on its new platform, our website will continue to attract increasing interest, as it has done since its revamp in 2017 (see **Appendix 1**).
* **Action to date:**
* Ann has now registered ‘***Great Maplestead Parish Council’*** with **Voice** to secure a place on the platform and enable the transfer of content to be made.
* **Further Actions:**
* It is planned to effect the transfer of content in early February, once a ‘spring clean’ of any old/unused/redundant documents and pictures has been carried out. This is to help simplify the transfer process by reducing the amount of content that needs to be moved.
* The transfer is an automatic process so, once completed, it will be necessary to re-establish some of the external links, the site ‘theme’ (look and feel), members and admins (users and permissions) and site settings such as name, description and domain name. This can all be done while the current site remains active, so there should be no loss of web presence during the process.
* Having the new site running in parallel with the current one for a time will also allow us to effectively ‘road-test’ the new site before going ‘live’.
* Once the new site is ready a re-direct will be set up from the old site.
* LCN, the company who we pay for our domain name and e-mail re-directs, will then need to update its settings to point to the new site.

1. **E-newsletter (Maplestead Magna Carta)**

* **Action Plan:**
* **Issue 31** is scheduled for publication on **w/c 10th February 2020** (tbc).
* Editorial content for this issue is suggested to include:
  + Road Safety Review update
  + Lucking St drainage project update
* VETS news
* Summer Fete Preview
* Light Pollution
* Any interesting District news (?)
* Cllr. Finch Parish update
  + Planning updates
  + Forthcoming events

**Footpaths**

* **Action Plan:**
* Interim assessment and maintenance will continue to be carried out on an *ad hoc* basis to monitor path conditions/rectify problems.
* A new contract to extend the Service Level Agreement to maintain our footpaths in the 2020/21 financial year needs to be requested by the end of **February**.
* The request claim needs to be presented on PC headed paper, with details of what we are claiming for. Receipts for last year’s expenses have been presented and the claims paid by the **ECC PRoW and Localism Officer**.