

Chairman's Report – March 2024

Areas of Responsibility

Footpaths

❖ Report:

- ECC's SLA grant for 2024/25 will be **£620 [Agenda Item 9.2]**
- Tony Hume will be given specific guidance as to which paths to work on and when, with the proviso that he submits an invoice that covers both his time and material expenses; it is intended that his costs will be met from the SLA grant. The Council's insurance will cover Tony while he carries out any work.
- The fallen tree that was blocking access to the copse on FP23 (Purls Hill to Hulls Mill) has now been moved aside.

❖ Action Plan:

- Work, delayed by inclement weather and poor ground conditions, is to be undertaken shortly to clear other overgrowth and some small fallen trees across FP23.

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Communications

1. Website/Facebook

❖ Report:

- The 'look and feel' of the website has now been updated after the hosting platform's mid-March withdrawal of the previous format – please advise if any further changes to the style are required.
- Since the last meeting, the **News** page of the website has been updated with information and details about:
 - **Carers' Voices Campaign** – ECC's initiative to support carers
 - **Recycling Centre Booking Scheme** – now made permanent
 - **BDC's New Waste Collection Policy** – effective 1st April
 - **What 3 Words** – ECC's app-based scheme for reporting potholes etc.
- Links to the **Maplestead Magna Carta** continue to be posted on both the **Council** and **Maplestead Mates** Facebook pages, for widest local coverage.

❖ Action Plan:

- The Facebook page will continue to share relevant posts with Maplestead Mates in order for its information to reach the widest possible local audience.

2. E-newsletter (Maplestead Magna Carta) [Agenda Item 12]

❖ Action Plan:

- **Issue 55** is scheduled for publication **w/c 25th March 2024** (tbc).
- Editorial content for this issue is suggested to include:

○ Bus Service – action?	○ Car Park Update
○ Parish Assembly	○ Phone Mast decision
○ Recycling Centre Booking	○ Planning News
○ Lucking St Drainage - action	○ Forthcoming events
- An online version will also be published on the **Council & Maplestead Mates** Facebook pages

General

Playing Field Car Park [Agenda Item 9.1]

❖ Report:

- Despite some temporary local repairs to the worst potholes, the car park's condition, exacerbated by the continuing inclement weather, has continued to deteriorate dramatically, which raises serious concerns about the Council's potential liability for pedestrian safety should nothing be done.
- The installation of a robust and more durable surface, that will neither deteriorate significantly in the longer term nor require constant maintenance and repair and will be suitable to cope with the increasing use the car park is now getting, is now urgently required.
- Examples and costs from three alternative surfacing materials suppliers have been obtained for review (see Clerk's Briefing Note 1)
- Over half of a **Car Park Surface Replacement Project** could already be funded from remaining playing field development money plus partial use of our reserves.



❖ Action Required:

- A decision on the most cost-effective option for re-surfacing the car park, an agreement on how to obtain the necessary remaining funding for the preferred option and the carrying out of the work necessary to make the car park a safe, maintenance-free area to match the rest of the playing field's enhanced facilities.

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Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy [Agenda Items 9.5/15]

❖ Résumé/Report:

- Requests to three major EV Charger suppliers for a public charge point in Great Maplestead having been refused, the Council received a proposal from a fourth, **Believ**, to supply and install a **fully-funded EV rapid charger**, capable of charging two vehicles at a time, to be located in the Playing Field car park.
- **Believ's** offer includes free planning and connection to the nearest suitable mains power source, installation of all the necessary equipment and signage and the long-term maintenance and operation of the charge point – there will apparently be no charge to the Council or any need for us to seek additional funding.
- **Believ** has confirmed, following a survey by UK Power Networks, that installation of a **50kW rapid chargepoint** in the car park is a viable proposition.
- The Council has therefore signed an NDA with **Believ** to enable their full commercial proposal to be considered at the March meeting. This proposal includes the granting of a 20-year lease on the location within the car park required for the charging equipment (but **not** the parking space for the vehicles being charged) and details of the monthly/annual rental the Council will receive.

❖ Action Plan:

- To decide in principle whether to proceed with the installation of an EV Charge Point in the Playing Field car park, in line with ECC's announced strategy to improve and extend the currently poor EV charging provision in rural areas of the county, and if so, how this will be implemented [as per **Agenda Item 9.5**].
- If it is decided to proceed with **Believ** as the preferred supplier, they are offering to do a presentation and Q&A session at the Parish Assembly in April as part of the required public consultation into the scheme.