

MINUTES of the ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held at Epping Hall, St. John's Road, Epping on **Tuesday 14th October 2014 at 8.15 pm.**

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs B Scruton (Town Mayor & Chair)
 Cllr Mrs L Hughes Cllr A Church (part)
 Cllr W Breare-Hall Cllr J A Smith
 Cllr Mrs J Hedges Cllr G Scruton
 Cllr H Pegrum Cllr L Burrows
 Cllr J Whitehouse

OFFICER: Alan Shaw (Town Clerk)

1 member of the public was present (Andrew Smith, Epping Society)

185 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr N Avey, Cllr M Wright and Cllr A Church

186 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

187 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME

Andrew Smith from the Epping Society addressed members on the subject of the e-mail he had sent to Council (Minute #190 of 2014/15 refers). Mr Smith suggested that Council should consider in future combining the Town Show and the Epping Festival and holding both events in Epping High Street. He suggested that the Town Council should seek to close the High Street to vehicular traffic and to involve the Town's businesses more in the promotion of the event. Mr Smith Stated that the Epping Society would be happy to assist with the publicity and promotion of such an event.

The Town Mayor thanked Mr Smith for his comments and invited thoughts from the Council.

Cllr J Whitehouse stated that people in the Town do enjoy the occasions when the High Street is closed. He also stated that the Town Centre Partnership had intimated that they would not be putting on an 'Epping Festival' event in 2015 but hoped to return in 2016.

Cllr J A Smith commented that there would be a section of the community that would not welcome a road closure for an event like the Town Show.

Cllr W Breare-Hall said that there would be a need to get the Town traders on board if such an event were to be planned and there would need to be an emphasis on publicity due to the disruption it would cause.

Cllr H Pegrum said that consideration had been given in the past to a carnival procession through the Town to Stonards Hill Recreation Ground and it would be worth considering this as an option.

The Town Mayor thanked members for their contributions and advised Mr Smith that the Town Council did want to organise a number of events throughout the year and consideration would be given to his thoughts.

188 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 9th September 2014 be signed by the Town Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

189 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was **RESOLVED** that the signed Minutes of the following Committee meetings be received together with any recommendations not previously adopted as approved:

Planning & General Purposes Committee	9th September 2014
Planning & General Purposes Committee	23rd September 2014
Epping Eppingen Advisory Committee	23rd September 2014

190 COMMUNICATIONS FOR DECISION

- (i) e-mail from Andrew Smith of the Epping Society, suggesting Council considers combining the Town Show with the Epping Town Festival and holding the combined event in the High Street, closing the High Street to traffic for the event

As Mr Smith attended Council to discuss this proposal, the Town Mayor decided to address this at Public Question time (Minute #187 of 2014/15)

191 TOWN MAYOR & DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES

The duties undertaken by the Town Mayor & Deputy Town Mayor for the period 9th September to 14th October 2014 were **NOTED** as detailed on agenda **Attachment F**.

192 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Members reported representing the Town Council at a number of outside organisations and events:

Cllr H Pegrum	Stone laying ceremony at Margaret Road, Theydon Trust
Cllr J Whitehouse	Town Centre Partnership, Epping Society Open Meeting
Cllr G Scruton	Epping Society Open Meeting
Cllr J A Smith	Epping Eppingen Quiz night, Stone laying ceremony at Margaret Road, Theydon Trust
Cllr Mrs J Hedges	Epping Eppingen Quiz night
Cllr L Burrows	Epping Horticultural Society

193 REPORT OF THE CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

Members **NOTED** the report of the Clerk. In addition to the items on the printed report, the Town Clerk advised members that details of the scheme to replace the Quality Councils scheme had been announced and accreditations to the new standard would begin in 2015. Councils who currently held the Quality Council status would automatically be transferred to the Foundation level of the new scheme for a year. The

new scheme would have three levels, Foundation, Quality and Quality Gold. Foundation level is considered to be the legal minimum standard of governance and transparency that a Town Council should have in place. The new awards are designed to be less bureaucratic to obtain and the majority of auditing can be done online. The Clerk will bring forward more details for consideration at a future meeting.

194 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 30th SEPTEMBER 2014

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr Mrs L Hughes, presented the September 2014 Financial Report.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the statutory basis for this item be noted as the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011; and,
- (ii) the September 2014 Financial Report be noted with no other action necessary at this time.

195 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr Mrs L Hughes, presented the payment schedules for September 2014.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the statutory basis for this item be noted as the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011;
- (ii) the List of Payments for September 2014 totalling £38,235.13 are approved as presented in the schedule.

196 BUDGET 2015/16 FIRST ESTIMATES

Council's Key Member, Cllr Mrs L Hughes presented the first draft estimates for discussion by Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be noted as Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and the Audit Commission Act 1998 s.44
- (ii) Members felt the first estimates were broadly satisfactory;
- (iii) Members would like to see estimates that include either frozen or reduced rates for Epping Hall to be considered in the second estimate;
- (iv) Members would like to assess whether the proposed 1% increase in Cemetery fees was in line with other Cemeteries in the locality. Cllr G Scruton agreed to research this matter and report back to Council.
- (v) Members would like the second estimate to be based on a freeze in the precept paid by residents.

197 EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT AND ANNUAL RETURN

Council **CONSIDERED** the report **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the statutory basis for this item be noted as the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and the Audit Commission Act 1998 ss. 9-11.
- (ii) The recommendations of the report be **NOTED** and the Town Clerk to ensure that the annual review of the Internal Control and Risk Management Statements is properly minuted.

198 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Council **CONSIDERED** this matter and **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the statutory basis for this item be noted as the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12
- (ii) That the date for the Annual Town Meeting be moved to Friday 20th February 2015.

199 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY TOWN CLERK

Council **CONSIDERED** this matter and **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the statutory basis for this item be noted as the Local Government Act 1972, s. 112
- (ii) The Job Description and Person Specification be **APPROVED**, subject to Council's comments: Namely that the Job Description should be reduced in length and some of the Essential and Desirable elements of the Person Specification should be transposed; amended version to be circulated to members for comments.
- (iii) The Town Clerk is **AUTHORISED** to incur costs for advertising the vacancy and the purchase of equipment for the new post.

Cllr A Church arrived at the meeting during consideration of the following item at 21.19 and gave apologies to the Town Mayor and other members for his lateness.

200 EPPING IN BLOOM

Council **CONSIDERED** this matter and **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the statutory basis for this item be noted as the Local Government Act 1972, s. 145
- (ii) A working party would be established to look into options to establish a wider 'Epping in Bloom' initiative in partnership with other local groups or by helping to establish a new group. The working party to comprise Cllr L Burrows, Cllr A Church and the Town Clerk.
- (iii) The Town Clerk to initially approach Epping Horticultural Society with the proposal to see if they would like to participate.

201 GRANT APPLICATION

Council **CONSIDERED** the additional information provided by Epping Cricket Club in relation to their grant application that was first considered at the Ordinary Council meeting on 9th September 2014. (Minute #160 Of 2014/15 refers).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the statutory basis for this item be noted as the Local Government Act 1972, s. 137.
- (ii) Council accepted the explanation provided by the Cricket Club for the apparent discrepancy in the accounts provided as part of the original grant application.
- (iii) The amount of £500 be granted to the Epping Cricket Club for the purpose of providing coaching courses to club members.

202 PROCEDURAL MOTION

Prior to consideration of Agenda Item 18 - Land at Thatched Cottage, Cllr H Pegrum **MOVED** that discussion of the item should take place in closed session. Cllr J A Smith seconded the motion.

It was **RESOLVED** that the item would be discussed after the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

203 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

204 LAND AT THATCHED COTTAGE

Council's Key Member for Outside Services, Cllr A Church, presented an outline of the item for discussion by Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be noted as the Local Government Act 1972, s.127.
- (ii) The Town Council would like to acquire the land for the Town if possible.
- (iii) Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to offer Mr West [figure redacted due to commercial sensitivity] in consideration for the land, and to engage Legal services to progress the matter if the offer is accepted.

205 ST JOHNS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL UPDATE

The Town Clerk outlined the progress since the last Ordinary Council meeting in September 2014, and provided detail of the discussions that have taken place with officers of Epping Forest District Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be noted as the Local Government Act 1972, s.127.
- (ii) The Town Council would be prepared to accept £150,000 less than was originally proposed to secure the preferred development proposal for the Town.

CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs B Scruton, closed the meeting at **22.28**.

Signature of Chairman

Date