

MINUTES of the ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held at Epping Hall, St. John's Road, Epping on **Tuesday 8th March 2016 at 8.15 pm.**

PRESENT:	Cllr M Wright	(Town Mayor & Chair)
	Cllr L Burrows	(Deputy Town Mayor)
	Cllr N Avey	Cllr Mrs D Baird
	Cllr A Church	Cllr H Pegrum
	Cllr Mrs B Scruton	Cllr G Scruton
	Cllr J A Smith	Cllr D Spillman
	Cllr Miss H Whitbread	Cllr J Whitehouse

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

462 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

463 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr J Whitehouse has requested an entry be made in the minutes to declare a non-pecuniary interest in the St John's Development Proposal item as a District and County councillor and as a neighbouring resident. Cllr A Church and Cllr N Avey declare a non-pecuniary interest in the St John's Development Proposal item as District councillors.

Cllr J Whitehouse declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 23 – Grant Applications as a close relative of the applicant. Cllr J Whitehouse left the meeting for the discussion and vote.

464 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

Cllr J Whitehouse entered here.

465 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME

No questions were received from members of the public.

466 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 9th February 2016 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

467 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 February 2016

Planning & General Purposes Committee	23 rd February 2016
Corporate Governance Advisory Committee	23 rd February 2016

468 COMMUNICATIONS TO BE NOTED

- Letter from Mr D Lodge – Blue Plaque for Churchill

Council **NOTED** the letter from Mr D Lodge thanking the Town Mayor & Town Clerk for their assistance with the blue plaque on M&S.

469 COMMUNICATIONS REQUIRING DECISION

- Letter from Essex Police

Council **CONSIDERED** the letter from Essex Police regarding the closure of the front counter of Epping police station on 1st April 2016. The Town Clerk advised members that the Town Clerk and Town Mayor had been to a meeting at Epping Forest District Council to discuss a contact point at EFDC and to date, there had been no further information.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) No further action was required at this time.

470 TOWN MAYOR & DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES

The duties undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor since 9th February 2016 as detailed on agenda **Attachment F** were **NOTED** by members.

471 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Reports from members were received on meetings or visits since the Ordinary Council meeting on 9th February 2016.

Cllr N Avey	Charity quiz night	26 th February 2016
	Theydon Trust meeting	1 st March 2016
	Green Belt Review meeting	3 rd March 2016
Cllr H Pegrum	Theydon Trust meeting	1 st March 2016

Cllr H Pegrum advised members that the new CAB building would be open in the next few months. The meeting had also discussed repairs and maintenance of Margaret Road and Close.

Cllr D Spillman	Neighbourhood Action Panel	11 th February 2016
	Italian Market	20 th February 2016
	Larger Local Councils	25 th February 2016
	Charity quiz night	26 th February 2016
Cllr Mrs B Scruton	Neighbourhood Planning Social	11 th February 2016
	Italian Market	20 th February 2016
	Epping-Eppingen meeting	24 th February 2016

	Charity quiz night	26 th February 2016
	Green Belt Review meeting	3 rd March 2016
Cllr G Scruton	Italian Market	20 th February 2016
	Charity quiz night	26 th February 2016
	Green Belt Review Meeting	3 rd March 2016
Cllr J A Smith	Charity quiz night	26 th February 2016
	Theydon Trust meeting	1 st March 2016
	Green Belt Review meeting	3 rd March 2016
Cllr Miss H Whitbread	Italian Market	20 th February 2016
Cllr Mrs D Baird	Italian Market	20 th February 2016
Cllr A Church	Italian Market	20 th February 2016
Cllr J Whitehouse	Neighbourhood Planning social	11 th February 2016
	Green Belt Review meeting	3 rd March 2016

472 **REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS**

The Town Clerk advised members that the Epping Together Household Questionnaire had generated a large response and some assistance would probably be needed with data collection, which the Clerk would report back on. The Town Mayor reminded members about the Flying the Flag for the Commonwealth at Epping Hall on Monday 14th March 2016 at 10am, when the affirmation would be read out.

Members **NOTED** the report of the Town Clerk.

473 **FINANCIAL REPORT TO 29th FEBRUARY 2016**

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton, presented the summary financial report to the 29th February 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, Sections 4 and 5 as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006;
- (ii) The Financial Report was **NOTED** with no other action necessary at this time.

474 **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton, presented the payment schedules for February 2016.

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 February 2016 totalling £74,071.23 were **APPROVED** as presented in the schedule.

475 EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS

From 2016/17, Council's external audit arrangements will be dealt with by SAAA rather than the Audit Commission. If Council's decision to opt out of the arrangements is not received by 31st March 2016, their external audit arrangements will automatically be dealt with by the SAAA. Council may choose to opt out and source their own external audit arrangements. The Town Clerk advised against this. This decision should be made by resolution.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015;
- (ii) Council will stay opted in, so their external audit arrangements will be dealt with by the SAAA.

476 SANTANDER BUSINESS BOND SIGNATORIES

The Town Clerk explained that the signatories for the Santander Business Bond are Cllr J A Smith, Cllr K Avey and Ash Tadrishi, which need updating. Cllr K Avey and Ash Tadrishi should be replaced by the Town Clerk, Beverley Rumsey and Cllr Mrs B Scruton.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, 111;
- (ii) Signatories Cllr K Avey and Ash Tadrishi should be replaced by the Town Clerk, Beverley Rumsey and Cllr Mrs B Scruton.

477 EPPING YOUTH COUNCIL TREASURER'S TRUST ACCOUNT

There is an old Treasurer's Trust Account with the Nationwide Building Society which has a balance of approximately £8.74 and this needs closing. There are four historic signatories and only Mr Ben Murphy is easily contactable. Nationwide have agreed to close the account with Mr Murphy's signature if Council resolves to allow him to do so.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, 111;
- (ii) Council would allow Mr B Murphy to close the bank account through liaison with the Town Clerk;
- (iii) The Town Clerk would oversee the closure of the account and the return of the funds to Council's bank account.

478 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Council discussed the **RECOMMENDATIONS** of the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The action plan for Epping Town Council 2016-17 is be **APPROVED** by Council;
- (ii) The three-year plan working group will meet to develop a three-year action plan for 2016-19 to be considered by Council;
- (iii) The Town Clerk will research a Council credit card, with an initial limit of £500, which would be paid off in full each month and would be the liability of Council;
- (iv) The following documents will be reviewed at least annually or as a result of changing legislation:

Internal and External Audits: February & October 2016

Statement of Internal Control: October 2016

Insurance Inventory: February 2016

Asset Register: February 2016

Internal Risk Register: February 2016

Staffing Terms and Conditions: February & October 2016

Standing Orders: February 2017

Financial Regulations: February 2017

Employee Handbook: October 2016

Internal Audit Programme: October 2016

- (v) The revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, which address the procurement procedures following the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and online banking, will be **ADOPTED** by Council;
- (vi) Councillors **NOTED** that training on a variety of Council subjects is available through liaison with the Town Clerk;
- (vii) The Internal Risk Register for 2016 would be **ADOPTED** by Council, subject to the inclusion of a section of loss of business continuity should anything unforeseen happen with regard to the St John's Development.
- (viii) Council **NOTED** the internal audit report (second interim) was in preparation following the internal audit's second visit of the current financial year on 23rd and 24th February 2016;
- (ix) The following policies would be **ADOPTED** as Epping Town Council policies from 2016.

Code of Conduct (EFDC Policy)

(Attachment O1)

Complaints Procedure

(Attachment O2)

Data Protection Policy

(Attachment O3)

Grant Awarding Policy

(Attachment O4)

Health & Safety Policy

(Attachment O5)

Recruitment Policy

(Attachment O6)

Training & Development Statement

(Attachment O7)

Media & Social Media Policy

(Attachment O8)

Procurement Policy

(Attachment O9)

- (x) The Town Clerk would provide a report on Council's IT support;
- (xi) The Town Clerk would assess the viability of the MacBook Pro and provide options;
- (xii) The Staffing Report 2016, presented to Council at the Ordinary Council meeting on 9th February 2016, which deleted the post of Deputy Town Clerk and created the post of Project Support Officer, with budget provision for the phased

addition of support staff, will supersede any previous staffing reports and form the basis of staffing moving forward.

479 INSURANCE POLICY 2016-17 & RECONCILIATION

Council awarded a three-year contract to Zurich Municipal from 1st April 2015. This policy is reviewed annually (despite its 3 year term) to ensure it is adequate for Council's protection. Members considered the insurance policy and reconciliation (which analyses Council's assets and inventories against its insurance cover).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111; Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members & Officers) Order 2004
- (ii) The Insurance Policy for 2016-17 as per Attachment P is **APPROVED** by Council;
- (iii) The Insurance Reconciliation document as per Attachment Q is **APPROVED** by Council.

480 ASSET REGISTERS 2015 & 2016

Council considered the revised form and content of the Asset Registers. As a result of a qualified audit in 2014/15, the Town Clerk recommended that the Asset Register should return to the earlier format which had been recommended and **APPROVED** in 2010. It was reviewed by Council in October 2012 (Minutes #201 & #222 of 2012/13 refer). It had been changed in 2014 and 2015 which made year on year comparison's difficult. In 2015, Council **RESOLVED** to record individual items equal to or greater than £1000 in the Asset Register (Minutes #371 and #397 of 2014/15 refer) and this is generally regarded as standard practice.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as Accounts & Audit Regulations 2003, Sections 4 & 5 as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006).
- (ii) Items of £1,000 and above are recorded in the Asset Register;
- (iii) The format of the Asset Register for 2015 and 2016 (which mirrors the earlier **APPROVED** format) would be used moving forward;
- (iv) The revised Asset Register 2015, as per **Attachment R**, is **APPROVED** by Council;
- (v) The Asset Register 2016, as per **Attachment S**, is **APPROVED** by Council.

481 CEMETERY RETROSPECTIVE PURCHASE OF A GRAVE

Council discussed a request from a member of the public who wishes to bury his mother's ashes in an exiting grave in the original burial area, which his aunt and uncle are buried in, but has never been purchased. An Exclusive Right of Burial must be

purchased in order for the ashes to be buried and the price would now be £757 (compared to four guineas and ten guineas in 1946 and 1967 respectively).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s214;
- (ii) An Exclusive Right of Burial could be purchased and the enquirer would be charged the price of interring cremated remains.

482 EPPING IN BLOOM MARKET GARDEN DESIGN

Council considered a design for Market Garden Terrace provided by Epping in Bloom. This contained benches and planters and would involve the market garden terrace being opened up as a community garden.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s145; and Public Health Act 1875, s164
- (ii) The design is **APPROVED** for the Market Garden Terrace;
- (iii) Use of the Market Garden Terrace land would **GRANTED** on a temporary basis, should Council need to use the land for anything else, therefore all features should be movable to safeguard the hard work;
- (iv) The Town Clerk and Town Supervisor would work with Epping in Bloom to deliver the community gardening project;
- (v) Assistance would be sought from local community partners;
- (vi) Consideration should be given to keys issues such as lighting and security.

483 SONIC BENCH

Council **CONSIDERED** the provision of a sonic (talking bench) in Epping which had been previously discussed in December 2014 (Minute #280 of 2014/15).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act, s145;
- (ii) Council would be keen to host a sonic bench providing a suitable and safe location could be found;
- (iii) The Clerk would contact St John's Church to see if the Church Garden may be a suitable location.

484 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Council considered two applications for grant funding:

- 1) Epping Forest ReUse: request for a grant of £250 for uniforms.
- 2) Playground at Theydon Association: request for a grant for £10,000 towards the cost of a playground.

A grant for £2500 has been awarded to the CAB in the phase one of grant applications (April to September 2015).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be NOTED as the Local Government Act, s137;
- (ii) A grant of £250 would be awarded to Epping Forest ReUse for uniforms.

485 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.

486 TENDERS FOR THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2016

Council considered the tenders for the Christmas Lights 2016/17.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be noted as the Local Government Act 1972, s145;
- (ii) The contract for the Christmas Lights 2016/17 would be awarded to Barrett Electrical;
- (iii) The contract would be awarded for one year;
- (iv) Tenders for the light curtain for St John's would be invited separately.

487 ST JOHN'S DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL UPDATE

Epping Town Council have not been informed of any progress.

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s127;
- (ii) Bookings would be taken on Epping Hall until the 31st March 2016 and revised if necessary.

CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr M Wright, closed the meeting at **21.35 hours**.

Signature of Chairman

Date