

MINUTES of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING** held in the Conference Room, Epping Hall on **Tuesday 10th February 2026 at 8pm.**

PRESENT:

Cllr Janet Whitehouse	(Town Mayor & Chair)	
Cllr Razia Sharif	(Deputy Town Mayor)	
Cllr N Avey	Cllr C Burgess	Cllr J Duffell
Cllr C McCredie	Cllr H Pegrum	Cllr G Scruton
Cllr Jon Whitehouse	Cllr M Wright	

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

370 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr H Whitbread and Cllr L Burrows.
Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr Jon Whitehouse.

371 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr G Scruton declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 21 as he is related to the tenant. Cllr G Scruton left the meeting and did not take part in any discussions or voting.

372 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

373 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions or comments.

374 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 13th January 2026 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

375 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

It was **RESOLVED** that the signed Minutes of the following Committee meetings be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

Planning & General Purposes Committee (Meeting 1)	13 th January 2026	(Attachment B)
Planning & General Purposes Committee (Meeting 2)	13 th January 2026	(Attachment C)
Planning & General Purposes Committee	27 th January 2026	(Attachment D)

376 COMMUNICATIONS TO NOTE/REQUIRING DECISION

(i) EFDC Consultation on New Economic Development Strategy

Council considered EFDC’s consultation on their new economic development strategy, as per **Attachment E**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) The Town Clerk would return the response as appended as per Attachment 1.

(ii) Epping Neighbourhood Plan

Council NOTED the information regarding Epping’s Neighbourhood Plan, as per **Attachment E1**.

(iii) S137 expenditure limit increase

Council **NOTED** the S137 expenditure limit increase (£11.60 per elector for 2026/27, up from £11.10). The maximum spend under this power is £106,998.40 (No of electors: 9224 x £11.60).

(iv) Epping Forest District Council: New garden and food waste arrangements

Council discussed EFDC’s new garden and food waste arrangements, as per **Attachment E2**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) The Town Clerk would write to EFDC’s waste team and advise them about Epping Town Council’s concerns over additional flytipping, rules and restrictions on Essex waste disposal centres and that charging was already operational.

(v) Change of Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

Council **NOTED** the change of Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, as per **Attachment E3**.

377 TOWN MAYOR & DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR’S DUTIES

The duties undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor since the Ordinary Council meeting on 13th January 2026 were **NOTED**.

Cllr J Whitehouse mentioned her forthcoming events. A Dementia Awareness session on 25th February 2026 at Epping Hall and a Dementia Fair at Epping Library on 1st March 2026.

378 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Jon Whitehouse entered the meeting here.

Reports from members were received on meetings or visits since the Ordinary Council meeting on 13th January 2026:

Cllr M Wright	Informal public toilet meeting	19 th January 2026
In January, the Horticultural Society published a list of the year’s forthcoming events which can be passed on.		
Cllr C Burgess	Launch of Epping Town Trail	4 th February 2026
Rotary had launched a Literacy Trail for the Town which would take place in March 2026. Writing competition for children and adults involving Epping Businesses.		
Cllr H Pegrum	Informal public toilet meeting	19 th January 2026

Cllr Jon Whitehouse	Informal public toilet meeting	19 th January 2026
	Launch of Epping Town Trail	4 th February 2026
Cllr G Scruton	Informal public toilet meeting	19 th January 2026
	Assertion 10 (AGAR) training	10 th February 2026
Cllr C McCredie	Community Cohesion (Community Safety Partnership related)	15 th January 2026
	Informal public toilet meeting	19 th January 2026
	Civilian Committee meeting Air Cadets	22 nd January 2026
	Launch of Epping Town Trail	4 th February 2026
	Community Safety Partnership meeting	5 th February 2026

379 REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

The Town Clerk highlighted the need for books in the Little Free Library.

The Town Clerk advised that the Jack Silley Pavilion was not suffering from subsidence but thermal shrinkage and movement due to the dry summer in 2025.

The Town Clerk highlighted that Epping Forest District Council had secured £1500 in funding from Essex County Council towards electricity in Epping High Street for potential events. The Town Clerk and officers from EFDC were working on delivering this.

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

380 REPORTS FROM EPPING FOREST DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Epping Forest District Council

Cllr Jon Whitehouse:

Epping Forest District Council finalising their budget over the coming weeks (as Essex County Council was).

Lots going on in planning. Latton Priory, the impact on parishes, lots of consultations and speculative applications.

Cllr Janet Whitehouse:

EFDC budget and trying to protect voluntary organisations.

Scrutiny Committee: TFL revisited with more robust answers.

381 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31ST JANUARY 2026

Council considered the summary financial report for January 2026, presented by Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and **APPROVED**;
- (ii) No further action was required at the current time.

382 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton presented the payment schedules for January 2026 totalling £46,378.35. (Barclays: £75.75, The Co-operative £45,871.50 & The Co-operative online £431.10). Please note petty cash withdrawals of £500 from The Co-operative.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- (ii) The list of payments for January 2026 were **APPROVED** as presented in the schedule.

383 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2026 FORMAT

Council considered the Annual Town Meeting format for 2026.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s9;
- (ii) The round the table discussions would not take place this year;
- (iii) The reports of the Town Mayor, Key Member for Planning & Neighbourhood Planning and the Key Member for Finance would be heard;
- (iv) The Neighbourhood Plan would be explained;
- (v) The Town Clerk and Town Mayor would finalise the speaker/s which would hopefully be from EFDC in relation to planning.

384 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES: UPDATED

Council considered the updated representatives on outside bodies information.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111;
- (ii) Cllr N Avey would contact the Friends of St Margaret's Hospital to re-establish a connection;
- (iii) The history of the Town Clerk's trusteeship of Epping Forest Band would be researched;
- (iv) Any groups deleted would include their year of deletion.

385 ALTERNATIVE AND NEW COMPETITIONS

Council considered the information regarding alternative and new competitions.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act, s111; s145;
- (ii) Epping Town Council would deliver the new Epping Rosebowl Competition, as per **Attachment K1**;

- (iii) The winner would be awarded at the Epping Horticultural Society's annual August show with their permission (Cllr M Wright as Council's representative would ask them);
- (iv) The winner would be photographed with their certificate and the Rosebowl, which would be engraved and kept at Epping Hall;
- (v) Epping Town Council would not pursue the new business community competition, as per **Attachment K2**, at the current time.

386 EXCLUSION OF THE 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.

387 TOWNSPERSON OF THE YEAR 2025

Council considered the nominations for Townsperson of the Year 2025, as per **Attachment L**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111;
- (ii) The Townsperson of the Year 2025 was chosen and this would be awarded at the Mayor's Civic Reception in April 2026.

388 YOUNG TOWNSPERSON OF THE YEAR 2025

Council considered the nominations for Young Townsperson of the Year 2025, as per **Attachment M**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111;
- (ii) The Young Townsperson of the Year 2025 was chosen and this would be awarded at the Mayor's Civic Reception in April 2026.

389 PUBLIC TOILETS: POTENTIAL CONTRACTS

Council considered the public toilet information as per **Attachment N**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s19; Public Health Act 1875, s164;
- (ii) The Town Clerk and Town Mayor would pursue the meeting with the Portfolio Holder at EFDC;
- (iii) Details of the providers' existing local and London projects would be shared to enable members to visit;

(iv) This would be given further thought over the coming year.

Cllr G Scruton left the meeting here.

390 JULIE'S CAFÉ: LEASE/LICENCE DETAILS

Council considered the cafe information as per **Attachment O**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be NOTED as the Local Government Act 1972, s126 & S144;
- (ii) The two requests in **Attachment O** were **APPROVED**;
- (iii) Council would look at external deterrents such as security lighting;
- (iv) The café tenant would look at potential internal security arrangements such as an alarm/detector.

CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr Janet Whitehouse, closed the meeting at **10.12pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date

MINUTES of the **PLANNING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING** held at Epping Hall, St. Johns Road, Epping on **Tuesday, 10th February 2026** at **7.15pm**.

PRESENT: Cllr N Avey (Chairman).
 Cllr M Wright (Vice Chairman)
 Cllr C Burgess
 Cllr C McCredie
 Cllr G Scruton

OFFICERS: Jo-Ann Lewis (Planning, Market & Events Officer)

IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the press was present.
 One member of the public was present.

361 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

362 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C McCredie declared a non-pecuniary interest in EPF/2564/25, as the member of the public to make a representation against the application is known to them.

363 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

364 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Committee **RESOLVED** that:

the minutes of the meeting of the Planning & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday, 27th January 2026 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

365 PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

There were no public questions. One member of the public present read an objection for application EPF/2564/25, 33 Chapel Road, the document was previously circulated to the planning committee prior to the meeting.

366 NOTICES AND INFORMATION

There were no notices and information.

367 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

EPF/0094/26	3, Woodberry Down, Epping, CM16 6RJ. Fox Developments.	Variation of Condition 2 Plan numbers of EPF/2389/24 (Demolition of existing dwelling and detached garage. Erection of 4no. four-bedroom dwellings with associated landscaping, private amenity areas, car parking and 3no. new vehicular accesses across the existing footway).
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<p>Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application at this point, however committee would like it to be raised that this is a 'retrospective' application as the properties have been built. Committee feel this is an abuse of planning regulations.</p>		
EPF/0124/26	33, Chapel Road, Epping, CM16 5DS. Mr I Bellis.	Demolition of existing rear conservatories. Erection of lower ground, ground and first floor rear extensions.
<p>Committee STONGLY OBJECT to this application. This development would result in a loss of amenity to the neighbouring property. This is an overdevelopment of the site and would increase the overall scale of the property to a level not in keeping with the original dwelling and character of Chapel Road.</p> <p>Relevant policies: EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033 Part One: Policy DM9 D(II), (VI), DM9 E DM12 A (I) (II), (III), DM12 B DM12 F</p>		
EPF/2054/25	283, High Street, Epping, CM16 4DA. Gandesha Estates Ltd.	Proposed Flatted Development for seven new flats.
<p>Committee STRONGLY OBJECT to this application. This is an overdevelopment of the site, resulting in a cramped form of development, due to its design, size, mass and height, all of which will result in a loss of amenity and privacy to the neighbouring properties and businesses in the vicinity. The height of the design above the front high street shop would appear dominant in this conservation area and to the wider surrounding area. Whilst the site only makes provision for two of the dwellings to have on-site parking, consideration should be given to the increase in commercial traffic from a busy high street in the form of delivery drivers, waste/recycling, that seven dwellings will inevitably need.</p> <p>Relevant policies: EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033, Part One: Policy DM9 A (i) (ii) DM9 D (i) (ii), (iv) DM9 I (i) (iii) National Planning Policy Framework December 2024: 115 (B) 118</p>		
EPF/0148/26	30, Garnon Mead, Coopersale, Epping, CM16 7RN. Valentine.	Single-storey rear extension with glazed roof element and partial first-floor extension.
<p>Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.</p>		
EPF/0160/26	9, Edenparc, Kendal Avenue, Epping, CM16 4PW. Mr J Jennings.	TPO/EPF/21/93 T19: Yew - Crown reduce to previous points, as specified. G3: Yew - Crown reduce to previous pruning points, as specified. Selective prune of overhang to neighbouring property by up to 3m, as specified. T20: Lawson Cypress - Selective prune of stem growing against fence, as specified.
<p>Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.</p>		
EPF/0165/26	45 Church Hill, Epping, CM16 4RF. Bayfords Tree Care.	TPO/EPF/03/84 (Ref: T5) T1: Oak - Reduce lateral stems overhanging neighbouring property to previous pruning points, as specified.

Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application, provided all work is carried out under the supervision of the arboricultural officer at Epping Forest District Council.		
EPF/0171/26	8, Theydon Place, Epping, CM16 4NH. Mrs Kani.	TPO/EPF/28/08 (Ref: T26 & T27) T1: Beech - Crown reduce height by up to 2m and laterals by up to 1.75m, as specified. T2: Lime - Crown reduce height by up to 2m and laterals by up to 1.75m, as specified.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application, provided all work is carried out under the supervision of the arboricultural officer at Epping Forest District Council.		

368 APPEALS

To consider the following Notices of Appeal as received from Epping Forest District Council since the date of the previous agenda and up until the date of this agenda.

AP-13603 (EPF/1833/25)	1, Bower Vale, Epping, CM16 7AS	Single storey extension to rear and side elevation.
Decision taken by P&GP Committee - 14th October 2025		
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
Committee have NO COMMENTS to make.		

369 PLANNING DECISIONS

Committee **NOTED** the decisions as received from Epping Forest District Council since the date of the previous agenda and up until the date of this agenda.

Cllr H Pegrum and Cllr Janet Whitehouse entered the chamber at the end of the meeting at 7.52pm and 7.53pm respectively.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **7.54pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date

MINUTES of the **PLANNING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING** held at Epping Hall, St. Johns Road, Epping on **Tuesday, 24th February 2026** at **7.15pm**.

PRESENT: Cllr N Avey (Chairman).
 Cllr M Wright (Vice Chairman)
 Cllr C McCredie
 Cllr G Scruton

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE:. Two members of the public were present.

391 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C Burgess.

392 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C McCredie declared a non-pecuniary interest in EPF/0181/26, as both members of the public with objections to the application are known to her.

393 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

394 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Committee **RESOLVED** that:

the minutes of the meeting of the Planning & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday, 10th February 2026 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

395 PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

There were public objections to application EPF/0181/26, Green Acres, Ivy Chimneys, which were heard under item 7, **Planning Applications**.

The Epping Society also submitted a written objection to application EPF/0186/26, 39 Amesbury Close, which was viewed by the planning committee.

396 NOTICES AND INFORMATION

There were no notices and information.

397 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

EPF/0181/26	Green Acres, Ivy Chimneys, Epping CM16 4EL	Construction of 10 no. new dwellings together with dedicated access from Ivy Chimneys road, a noise attenuation bund and fencing and associated development.
Committee OBJECT to this application.		

Committee are concerned about the sequencing of the South Epping Masterplan delivery. This scheme requires alterations to the entrance point/road and a loss of greenery without the delivery of the infrastructure requirements for the South Epping development as a whole.

This is already a busy and dangerous location for traffic as the road serves both the congested Theydon Road junction and is a thoroughfare to Ivy Chimneys primary school. Refuse and large vehicles already have to reverse with difficult sight lines. Ten sizable family homes will exacerbate the traffic and decrepit roads before the infrastructure for the rest of the South Epping is delivered. Other ad hoc developments such as that in Bridge Hill all add to these cumulative effects. South Epping should be delivered in its connected entirety, not in piecemeal parts. This is a key element of the Masterplan exercise. Schools and services are already over capacity without additional infrastructure, making this proposal unsustainable. While Committee support family homes, this must be in sustainable locations.

Committee would request that consideration is given to whether this scheme contravenes the design codes.

The proposal details negative viability which raises concerns over future requirements for affordable housing and S106 contributions.

Any development in this location should be properly phased in accordance with Masterplanning requirements.

Relevant policies:

EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033 Part One: SP2, DM1, DM6C, DM9 B, D (iii), DM16, P1 M Strategic Masterplan Framework & Design Codes S Epping Final April 2025

National Planning Policy Framework Dec 24: Paras 7 & 199

EPF/0186/26	39, Amesbury Close, Epping, CM16 4JA. Smith.	Two-storey plus loft extension of existing two-storey building to provide additional two residential units.
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Committee have **NO OBJECTION** to this application.

398 APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE

(Attached)

Please find attached a copy of a new application from Foamology Ltd for a premises licence at 175 High Street Epping CM16 4BL (formerly Kasha Bar) for the following licensable activities:

The Sale by Retail of Alcohol Monday to Saturday 08.30 – 23.00, Sunday 11.00 – 23.00, on and off sales:

Opening Times are the same as above, Monday to Saturday 08.30-23.00, Sunday 11.00-23.00.

The premises will operate as a small, community-focused café and taproom specialising in Belgian beer produced locally by The Belgian Brewer. During daytime hours, the venue will function primarily as a coffee shop and bottle shop, serving coffee, pastries, and take-away beers, particularly catering to local residents and the nearby Monday market.

In the evenings, the premises will operate as a relaxed social taproom offering draught beer alongside simple food. The venue is designed as a social café-style space rather than a late-night bar, with low-level background music, seated service predominating, and a strong emphasis on responsible drinking and neighbourhood integration.

The consultation period for this application started on **10th February 2026** and ends **9th March 2026**, any representations or comments must be submitted within the time period.

Committee have NO OJECTION to this premises licence application.

399 PLANNING DECISIONS

Committee **NOTED** that no decisions were received from Epping Forest District Council since the date of the previous agenda and up until the date of this agenda.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **7.50pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date

MINUTES of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held in the Conference Room, Epping Hall on **Tuesday 24th February 2026 at 8pm.**

PRESENT: Cllr R Sharif (Chairman & Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr G Scruton (Key Member Finance)
Cllr N Avey (Key Member Administration)

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer)

400 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

401 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received from members.

402 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

403 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions or comments.

404 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee meeting held on 28th October 2025 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

405 STATUS OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no previous recommendations requiring action.

406 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT REVIEW

Council **APPROVED** a review of policy and governance documents at the Ordinary Council meeting on 8th March 2016 (Minute #478 of 2015/16).

The list of policies for annual review and the dates for review were as follows (annually):

Internal and External Audits: **February & October** (Now at the closest Council meeting to when received)

Internal Audit Programme: **October (Now at the Annual Council meeting)**

Statement on Internal Control: **October**

Insurance Inventory: **February (Working document to inform the Asset Register)**

Asset Register: **February (Dealt with under agenda item 10)**

Internal Risk Register: **February (Dealt with under agenda item 9)**

Staffing Terms and Conditions: **February & October (Dealt with under items 14-16)**

Standing Orders & Financial Regulations: February (**Dealt with under agenda item 8**)

Employee Handbook: **October (if changes are required. If not, after each new Council (October CGAC)**

Risk Management Statement: **October**

Please note these were the current recommended review dates, but legislation may amend the dates if an earlier review is required.

Changing regulations and audit comments may add further items to this list.

The CGAC review process leads to recommendations to Council for amendments to documents to be made.

At the Corporate Governance meeting on 25th February 2025 (Minute #420 of 2024/25), Committee RECOMMENDED that the review process should be changed (Minute #463 of 2024/25), with the Town Clerk bringing items for review at the frequency required legally or deemed necessary. The list of policies held would be shared at the Annual Council meeting each year.

Some items still need reviewing annually and these are itemised above and will continue to be placed on the relevant February or October Corporate Governance Advisory Committee agendas.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Town Clerk would present the new policy review document to Council again as a reminder of Council's policies.

407 **STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, sch 12, para 42; Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

There had been some minor changes to the model Standing Orders since the last review. The Town Clerk had therefore made changes to this document. The existing and revised were presented to Committee as per **Attachments B & B1**.

There had been recommended changes to the model Financial Regulations since the last review. The Town Clerk had therefore made changes to this document. The existing and revised were presented to Committee as per **Attachments C & C1**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Standing Orders (with amendments) should be RECOMMENDED for ADOPTION by Council;
- (ii) The Financial Regulations (with amendments) should be RECOMMENDED for ADOPTION by Council.

408 INTERNAL RISK REGISTER

Statutory Basis: Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

The Town Clerk has reviewed the Internal Risk Register and made some additions.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Internal Risk Register with amendments should be **RECOMMENDED** for **ADOPTION** by Council;
- (ii) It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Risk Register be revisited and revised as need/circumstances required (if needed), in addition to its annual review.

409 ASSET REGISTER

Statutory Basis: Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

At the Ordinary Council meeting on 11th March 2025, Council **RESOLVED** to record individual items equal to or greater than £1000 in the Asset Register (Minute #463 (iv) of 2024/25).

PLEASE NOTE: The Asset Register records all individual items of £1000 or greater. Council have many assets whose value is less than £1000 and these are recorded in Council's inventories which are updated annually. This is standard practice.

There has only been one acquisition and one disposal (individual items over £1000) during 2025/26 which is reflected in the Asset Register 2026, as per **Attachment E**.

Committee considered the following **RECOMMENDATIONS**:

- (i) Council should continue to record assets as individual items with a value equal to or greater than £1000 in the Asset Register;
- (ii) The Asset Register 2026, as per **Attachment E**, should be **APPROVED** as a correct record of Council's assets at this time;
- (iii) Any revisions to the draft will be presented to full Council in March.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The three **RECOMMENDATIONS** above would be **RECOMMENDED** for **APPROVAL** by Council.

410 HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Epping Town Council's Health & Safety Policy was **APPROVED** on 11th March 2025 (Minute #463 (vii) of 2024/25) and is now due for review. Committee considered the Health & Safety Policy, as per **Attachment F**. The Town Clerk has added 3 policies to the Health & Safety policy, as these 3 clauses were highlighted by Peninsula as missing: Fit For Work policy (~~F1~~) No Smoking Policy (~~F2~~), Alcohol & Drugs Policy (~~F3~~)

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Health & Safety Policy as per **Attachment F**, would be **RECOMMENDED** for **APPROVAL** by Council, with the added 3 policies as per **Attachments F1-F3** (appended to the policy).

411 **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.

412 **NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) POLICY**

Committee considered the new draft IT policy, which is required as part of the new Assertion 10 audit requirements. This draft will be worked on by the Town Clerk and Council's IT provider.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The IT policy would be a working draft which would be worked on by the Town Clerk and Council's IT provider and then be brought back to Committee or Council for **APPROVAL** as a policy of Epping Town Council.

413 **INSURANCE POLICIES (CONTRACTS) & RECONCILIATION**

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s111; Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members & officers) order 2004

Committee **NOTED** the insurance information (this will be a mid term (start of Year 2) uplift and forthcoming renewal details for July 2026. The Town Clerk will prepare the necessary documentation in advance of the renewal.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) would work on the renewal documentation once received and it would be brought to Council.
- (ii) The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial officer (RFO) would check the provision for cover for Key Personnel;
- (iii) The Town Clerk/ Responsible Financial officer (RFO) would work on Cyber Essentials with Council's IT Provider.

Please note: the insurance quotations generally arrive quite close to the renewal date (1st July each year) giving insufficient time for it to be included on a Council agenda in advance of the renewal, which has to take place on that date for continuity of cover.

414 STAFF PAY SCALES

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Committee **NOTED** that Epping Town Council staff are governed by the terms of conditions set by the NJC (National Joint Council) (set by NALC and SLCC). The current staff pay scales are listed as per **Attachment H**.

The pay scales which came into effect on 1st April 2025, were received in July 2025 and was backdated. This delivered an increase across all scale points of 3.2%. It is very common for pay awards to arrive in November of the relevant financial year and when they are received after 1st April, salaries are backdated accordingly. Please note: discussions on the 2026/27 staff pay awards are still ongoing at union level. The Town Clerk/RFO has built an increase of approximately 4% into the 2026/27 budget.

The Essex Pension Fund (which relates to all relevant staff employed with Epping Town Council prior to 2018) employer pension contribution rate from 1st April 2025 is 24.8% (1st April 2023-1st April 2026). We have been advised that the employer pension contribution rates for the 2026/27 fund year will be 23.8%, 22.8% for the 2027/28 fund year and 21.8% for the 2028/29 fund year. The employer pension contribution rate for NEST (which relates to all relevant staff employed with Epping Town Council after 2018) is currently 8% (a minimum of 3% from the employer, 5% from the employee: 4% from the employee, 1% tax relief) (from 6th April 2019) onwards). We have not received any alternative NEST rates for 2025 at the time of writing.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

415 STAFFING MATTERS and STAFF TERMS & CONDITIONS

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Committee **CONSIDERED** the RECOMMENDATION from the Town Clerk that Staffing Matters and Terms & Conditions would remain an item on the Corporate Governance Committee agenda but would only be a detailed item if there were matters to note or requiring attention. Otherwise, it would state:

There are no staffing matters requiring attention at the current time.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Committee would RECOMMEND this to Council.

416 **TOWN CLERK APPRAISAL**

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Committee **NOTED** the Town Clerk's appraisal which would be undertaken in February 2026, by the Chairman of Council 2025-26, Cllr Janet Whitehouse.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **9.08pm**.

(NB: The matters on this agenda have a statutory basis under the Local Government Act 1972 in sections 101 and 111, in addition to those stated.)

Signature of Chairman

Date

ATTACHMENT E

50 Favourite Trees of Epping

We are looking for new nominations for trees to be part of a new 50 Favourite Trees of Epping Forest District following on from the successful project that was carried out in 2007.

One of the main objectives of the previous competition was that there was at least one tree per parish or town council in the District and it would be nice to replicate that in this one too.

We are using the same categories as before which were:

- Trees in the landscape
- Trees in the right location
- Rare trees
- Historic People and Trees
- Old Ages Trees

We are looking more particularly for some species that were missed from the previous list such as:

- Beech
- Cherry
- Elm
- Hazel
- Silver Birch
- Whitebeam
- Yew

Nominations can be made here: <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/help-choose-the-districts-favourite-trees/>

If this is a project you would like to contribute to, let me know.

We are accepting nominations of trees on Epping Forest, just with a note that some of the more well know trees were included in the 2007 list.

I have also attached a poster that can be used in noticeboards or other publicity. I can also send out printed versions if requested.

Thanks,

Tom Simon.

Senior Countryside Officer, Countryside, Epping Forest District Council,





Epping Forest district's 50 favourite trees

We want to know if there is a tree you think is special and makes life just that bit better?

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of Epping Forest District Council's Countrycare service, we are compiling a list of the 50 Favourite Trees of the Epping Forest District.

The top suggestions will become the new

50 Favourite Trees of Epping Forest District

and be part of an exhibition at Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey during November 2026.

Nominated trees must be in the Epping Forest District or on public land.

Closing date for entries is May 2026.

The survey to find our top 50 Favourite Trees is part of Countrycare's involvement with the Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme.

Please visit Epping Forest District Council's website to submit your nominations and for more information.



ATTACHMENT F

NORTH WEALD BASSETT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



NORTH WEALD BASSETT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

North Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2033

**Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Consultation
Version
February 2026**



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APPENDIX A: EPPING FOREST LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATIONS



1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Neighbourhood planning gives local people and communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their local area, and to shape its development and growth. This power, afforded by the Localism Act 2011, gives local communities the ability to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs. Amongst other uses, a neighbourhood plan, once made, becomes part of the statutory development plan and can supersede non-strategic policies in the Local Plan.
- 1.2 For the purpose of clarity and to avoid confusion, within this document:
- 'North Weald Bassett' refers to North Weald Bassett Parish in its entirety.
 - 'North Weald Village' refers to the village of North Weald only.
 - 'Thornwood' or 'Thornwood Common' refers to the village of Thornwood only.
 - 'Hastingwood' refers to the Ward of Hastingwood, excluding Latton Priory.
 - 'Hastingwood Ward' refers to the ward in its entirety, including Latton Priory.
 - 'Latton Priory', whilst located within the Hastingwood Ward, refers to the Latton Priory Masterplan Area as per the Epping Forest Local Plan.
 - 'Neighbourhood Plan Area', 'Plan Area' or 'Neighbourhood Area' refers to North Weald Bassett Parish in its entirety.

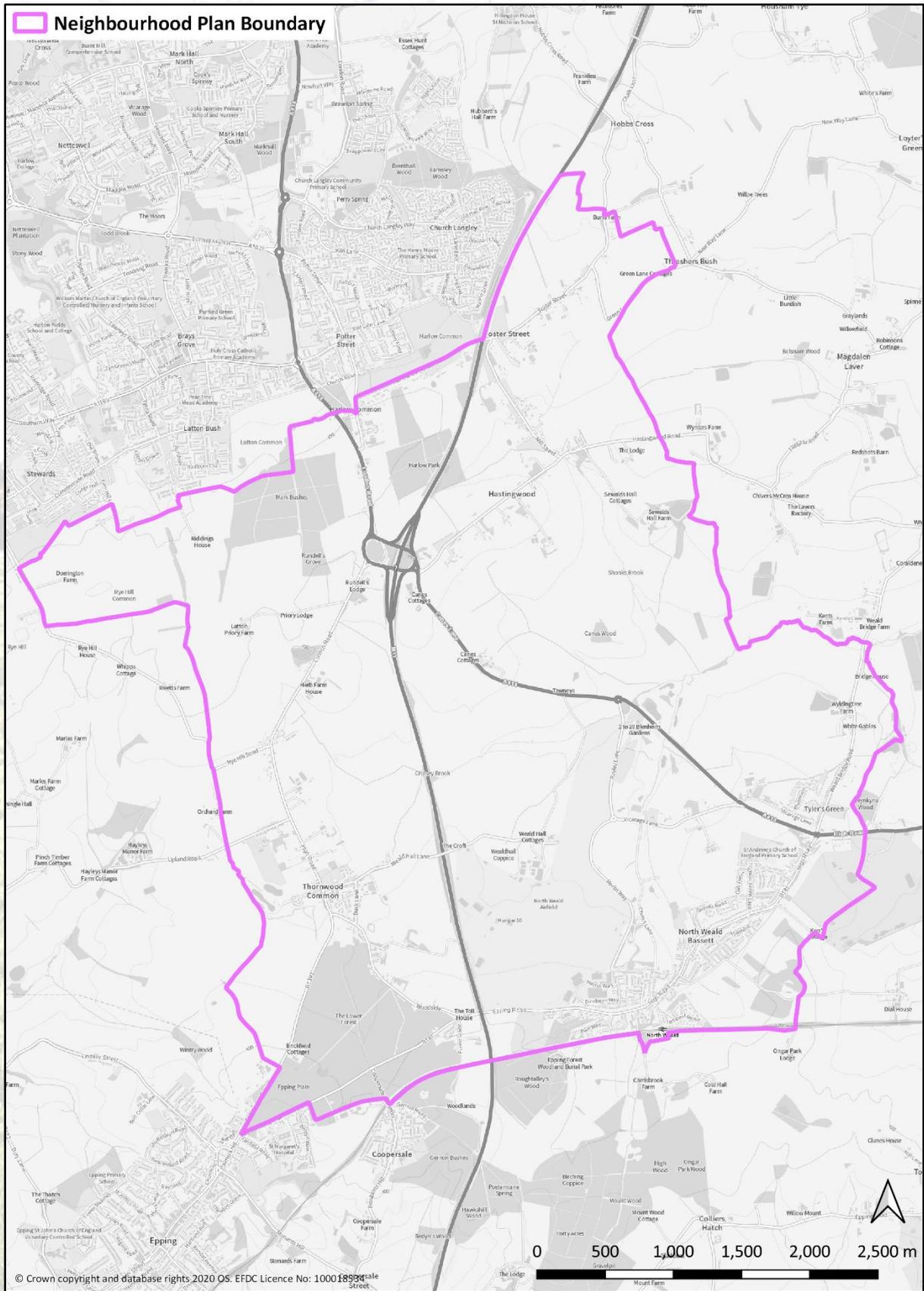
Purpose of the plan

- 1.3 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for North Weald Bassett for the period 2025 to 2033. The Plan contains a vision for the future of North Weald Bassett parish and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.
- 1.4 The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish. It also provides guidance to anyone wishing to submit a planning application for development within the parish. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible. The different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to North Weald Bassett, its residents, and community groups.
- 1.5 Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site or area-specific and apply only to the appropriate areas illustrated on the relevant map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, Epping Forest District Council will apply all relevant policies of the Plan. It is therefore assumed that the Plan will be read as a whole, although some cross-referencing between Plan policies has been provided.
- 1.6 The process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan has identified a number of actions which have not been included in the policies' sections. This is because these are not specifically related to land use matters and therefore sit outside the jurisdiction of a Neighbourhood Plan. These actions will be addressed by the Parish Council outside of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Policy context

- 1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan represents one part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area over the period 2025 to 2033, the other part being the Epping Forest Local Plan.
- 1.8 On 23rd January 2017 Epping Forest District Council, as the local planning authority, designated the whole of North Weald Bassett parish as the Neighbourhood Area to enable North Weald Bassett Parish Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. This designation followed a challenge by the Parish Council to include an area of land (initially excluded from the designation) to the south of Harlow (Latton Priory) but which sat within the Parish of North Weald Bassett.
- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the community through both the North Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group along with the support of the Parish Council, and in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Parish Council has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period.
- 1.10 The map in Figure 1.1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is the same as the administrative boundary of the parish.
- 1.11 The Epping Forest Local Plan 2023 provides an up-to-date spatial framework and evidence base to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.12 The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that allocations for development in North Weald Bassett have been made in the Epping Forest Local Plan. These allocations have been included for reference purposes in Appendix A. In addition, to the north-west and north of the parish a new garden town has been allocated at Harlow and Gilston. This will accommodate at least 10,000 along with a range of other facilities and infrastructure. The development of the garden town will have an impact on North Weald Bassett.

Figure 1.1: North Weald Bassett neighbourhood plan area



Monitoring the Plan

- 1.13 North Weald Bassett Parish Council, as the responsible body, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery. The Parish Council intends to review the document at least every two years but this may be undertaken more frequently if required.

Developing the Plan

- 1.14 The information that has inspired this plan has been assimilated and collated on a voluntary basis by the North Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group formed in 2016, and the Parish Council. The steering group consisted of local residents, with representation from each of the three villages in the Parish, together with support from the Parish Council-appointed Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee. Both the Steering Group and the Parish Council have spent considerable time obtaining the views of local residents to establish what is important to them, and how they see the future of the Parish evolving. These views have been obtained by way of pop-up workshops, feedback gained at local community events, two large scale community consultations, liaising with local groups, and a number of public consultation events.
- 1.15 Much of the initial inputs from the community were gathered during the period up to 2020. The Covid pandemic and uncertainty with the EFDC Local Plan paused activity for a considerable period of time. When the preparation of the plan was picked up again in 2024, it was important to ascertain whether the community's views regarding the issues had changed. A survey was commissioned and carried out in early 2025. Whilst the headline outcome was that the community's views remained broadly unchanged, the findings from this survey have been fed into the development of the plan. As such, the plan is considered to reflect the position as it stands today in North Weald Bassett.
- 1.16 The parish of North Weald Bassett is unique – each area having its own specific identity, challenges and opportunities. Extensive consultation has taken place over several years, and in many different formats, with both the local community and key stakeholders at the heart of this consultation. The responses to this consultation, together with evidence from other important sources, has led to the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan that looks to create a future that respects the important heritage and our locally valued sense of identity, all set against a backdrop of plans by the District Council for a high level of growth. It is inevitable that growth will happen, as it has in the parish throughout its history, and it is true that the Parish will change considerably over the coming years. This Plan aims to provide the best opportunity to ensure that growth occurs whilst always respecting our villages, our countryside, and what is valued by our local community. Community is at the heart of this plan.

2 LOCAL CONTEXT

North Weald Bassett's local context

2.1 North Weald Bassett parish is in Epping Forest district, located in West Essex. The parish consists of three areas:

North Weald village

Thornwood

Hastingwood

2.2 The northern boundary of the parish runs contiguous with the southern edge of Harlow. The eastern, southern and western boundaries are flanked by agricultural land and settlements, the largest of which is Epping, located to the south west. Further afield, Bishop's Stortford is located approximately 18km to the north and Chelmsford is situated approximately 20km to the east.

2.3 The M11 bisects the parish from north to south providing a direct connection to the M25, approximately 3km to the south, and Stansted Airport, approximately 18km to the north. Hastingwood roundabout, located in the north of the area, is a junction of the primary roads in the parish, namely:

- the M11;
- the A414 which runs from Harlow in the north across to the south east of the area and onto Chelmsford;
- the B1393 which runs south west from the roundabout to Epping.

2.4 The Epping Ongar Railway heritage railway, now a preserved heritage railway, traverses the southern boundary of the area. The North Weald Airfield occupies land in the south and is used for various industrial and distribution activities, alongside both private light aviation, Air ambulance, police helicopter operations, and heritage aviation.

2.5 Epping Underground Station generates traffic on the B181 and B1393 drawing commuters to the Essex terminus of the Central Line which has notably cheaper fares to central London than the surrounding overground rail connections.

2.6 The Stort Valley Way is a circular recreational footpath around Harlow, measuring 45km. The route passes through the northern half of the parish.

History of North Weald Bassett

2.7 From the beginning of the medieval period the Neighbourhood Area was mainly forested and the principal place names of the area, Thornwood, Hastingwood and North Weald, are a reminder of this historic character; Weald meaning "a wood" in Old English.

2.8 Throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods the area developed over time to support an agricultural way of life. Products were diverse, with a large variety of crops cultivated as well as livestock including pigs, sheep and cattle. From the late 19th and early 20th century



some specialisation in production occurred, as the railway gave greater access to the markets of London.

- 2.9 Primary areas of settlement, including the villages of Thornwood Common and North Weald, remained dispersed in character until the 20th century. As the population of the area increased, in part influenced by the construction of North Weald Airfield early in the century, the villages became more consolidated as modern housing was developed.
- 2.10 Its population started to grow in the latter part of the 19th century, but the local character did not change materially until the establishment of the North Weald Airfield in 1916 by the Royal Flying Corps. This was quickly followed in 1918 by the Royal Air Force which established and used North Weald Airfield as a base. North Weald village gained its first village hall in 1928, followed by a few purpose-built shops along the High Road in the 1930s. During the Second World War an army camp was constructed at Thornwood.
- 2.11 Between 1945 and 1960, new housing was built in various locations around North Weald village. In 1949, the Epping to Ongar Branch Railway became part of the London Underground Central Line. In 1964, the RAF left their station at North Weald Airfield, resulting in a loss of employment in the area. Further housing growth came in the late 1960s and 1970s. In 1979, North Weald Airfield was opened as a civilian airfield and in 1980, the M11 was opened, travelling north to south through the Neighbourhood Plan area, improving access to London. In 1994, the Epping to Ongar Branch Railway closed but in 2004 a 6.5-mile stretch was opened as a heritage railway, with North Weald Station at its centre.
- 2.12 The present day character of the villages is largely a reflection of this modern development, along with the creation of the M11 and limited industrial development in Thornwood Common.

Profile of the community today

- 2.13 Unless otherwise stated, all figures are from the 2021 Census.

North Weald village

- 2.14 Some notable facts about the profile of North Weald village:
- It is the most populous village in the Parish (4,748 people in 1,978 households in 2021).
 - It has a high proportion of older people (23% are aged over 65 compared with the England average of 18%).

- Despite this, 59.8% of adults aged 16 and over are economically active, which is slightly below the England average (60.9%).
 - The main sectors that residents work in are retail and construction.
 - The housing stock is predominantly semi-detached, accounting for 37% of housing, with very high levels of owner occupation (72% against an England average of 61%). The proportion of social rented housing (17%) is the same as the national average.
 - Car ownership is high, with 49% of households having access to at least two cars. The England average is 35%.
- 2.15 The village is a linear residential settlement concentrated along the B181. There are a number of small commercial developments scattered through the village including local convenience shops, a petrol station, two public houses, and two community halls.
- 2.16 The primary route through the settlement is the B181, which defines the central axis of North Weald village, connecting it with Epping to the south and the A414 in the north. The B181 draws a high volume of traffic from commuters driving to Epping Station; the Essex terminus of the Central Line which provides cheaper access to central London than the nearest overground train lines.
- 2.17 Cars often park straddling the kerb or on the pavement along the B181, which makes the road and pavement narrower, often restricting movement.
- 2.18 A number of bus services run along the B181 allowing access to facilities and services outside North Weald village to residents who cannot drive, however these are infrequent, often unreliable, and ceasing relatively early in the evenings.
- 2.19 The A414 crosses the B181 just to the north of North Weald village at Tylers Green. The A414 leads to east Chipping Ongar and Chelmsford, and to the M11 and Harlow in the north.
- 2.20 The M11 provides easy access to London in the south and to Cambridge in the north. It is accessed from within the parish from the A414. Closure and delays on the nearby M25, and on the M11 often results in gridlock throughout North Weald village and an increase in heavy goods vehicles in the area.
- 2.21 A small row of shops, grocers, restaurants, takeaways and services creates a focus of activity in the centre of the village.
- 2.22 A dominant feature of the village is North Weald Airfield, with North Weald village owing a good part of its identity to the historic presence of the Royal Airforce. A strong military influence can be seen throughout the village, both in terms of design and referencing.
- 2.23 The North Weald Airfield Museum is located just off Hurricane Way, in front of which is the Debt of Honour and the Norwegian Stone, given to the people of the district by HRH, Crown Princess of Norway, Princess Astrid in 1952. The stone represents the strong Norwegian links going back to the Second World War. This is reflected further in Norway House, a former officers' mess located opposite the stone, presently used as temporary accommodation for homeless or displaced people
- 2.24 Several public rights of way cross through the centre or skirt the edge of the village, providing access to the rural landscape. For example, the routes north of North Weald village along Church Lane to the Parish Church of St Andrew, or east of the village over Weald Common leading toward North Weald Redoubt, a Scheduled Monument.
- 2.25 The Epping Ongar Railway, a heritage railway has one of its three functioning stations in North Weald Bassett which has been refurbished but does not function as a transport link. The line

runs between Ongar and Epping and creates a line of severance in the landscape limiting the number of roads and routes in a north-south direction to the south of North Weald.

- 2.26 With the exception of a few commercial or community uses and the Airfield, the character of the village is almost exclusively residential development. As a result, levels of activity are low and there is a sense of relative tranquillity away from the busy B181.
- 2.27 The village is served by St Andrew's CE Primary School, located just off Beamish Close, directly adjacent to which is the Queens Hall Community Centre and Memorial Playing Fields – A Queen Elizabeth II Fields In Trust site.
- 2.28 The village consists of mainly two storey brick buildings, typically with pitched roofs, with an array of architectural styles and ages. The village is surrounded by, and has strong connections with, the surrounding agricultural landscape which provides tree or hedge lined backdrops to views out of the village and a sense of openness to the edges of the village.
- 2.29 The Parish Church of Saint Andrew located in Vicarage Lane West, with a closed churchyard and a Lych Gate marking the entrance. Constructed in c.1330 St Andrews Church is a grade II* listed building. North Weald Bassett Cemetery is independent of the Parish Church of St Andrew, located immediately to the east of the Church, and includes areas for burials and a garden of remembrance.



Thornwood Common

2.30 Some notable facts about the profile of Thornwood Common:

- It is home to 1,026 people living in 400 households.
- It has a high proportion of older people (24% are aged over 65 compared with the England average of 18%).
- 60.7% of adults aged 16-74 are economically active, which is almost the same as the England average (60.9%).
- The main sectors that residents work in are retail and health and social work.
- The housing stock is predominantly a mix of detached and semi-detached properties, together accounting for 69% of housing, with very high levels of owner occupation (76% against an England average of 61%). The proportion of social rented housing (13%) is below the national average (17%).
- Car ownership is high, with 54% of households having access to at least two cars. The England average is 35%.
- A number of newer developments are currently under construction, one being of a more modern nature.



2.31 Thornwood Common is a small hamlet comprising a mixture of residential areas as well as light industrial and commercial land uses, dissected by the B1393 which runs from the Harlow Roundabout at Junction 7 of the M11, towards Epping.

2.32 The main settlement core of Thornwood Common is bounded by Woodside road and the B1393 between Woodside and Weald Hall Lane, west of Duck Lane.

2.33 The Parish Hall is located within the core, as is Thornwood Common (a registered Village Green), Thornwood Allotments and the Thornwood Nature Reserve.

2.34 There is a series of large industrial warehouses which contrast with the residential character due to the building size, materials and features such as security fencing to the perimeter.

2.35 Development can be found dispersed along the streets away from the hamlet's nucleus with lower development density. The houses further from the centre of Thornwood Common typically have larger front gardens fronted by hedgerows and larger back gardens which border the hedgerows of the agricultural fields.

2.36 The development along Woodside is more spread out than the centre of Thornwood Common. The houses are typically of red brick, rendered and weather boarded timber frame, which contribute positively to local distinctiveness of the area and have well vegetated front gardens including trees and large shrubs which integrate the houses into The Lower Forest. The wooded edge character is intimate and enclosed.

- 2.37 There is a strip of built form along Upland Road which has no particular relationship with the surrounding landscape and does not reflect its rural setting. Sited along Upland Road is the Upper Clapton Rugby Club.
- 2.38 South of the hamlet is The Lower Forest – an ancient woodland and SSSI providing an important green link forming part of Epping Forest (one of the largest areas of ancient woodland in the country) connecting to Garnon Bushes Nature Reserve to the south.
- 2.39 The trees of The Lower Forest contribute to the skyline along Woodside and the southern part of the B1393 and provide a natural, wooded, semi enclosed character. The woodland contributes to the setting of the hamlet and provides physical separation between the settlement and Epping to the south.
- 2.40 The B1393 through Thornwood is an extremely busy route, used by commuters from Harlow to access Epping and the London Underground Central Line station at Epping, as well as providing the most direct link from Epping to the M11 and Harlow. As in North Weald village, issues on the M25 and M11 have significant impacts on these local routes.

Hastingwood

- 2.41 Some notable facts about the profile of Hastingwood village:
- It is the least populous village in the Parish (292 people in 110 households in 2021).
 - It has a high proportion of older people (22% are aged over 65 compared with the England average of 18%).
 - Despite this, 65.4% of adults aged 16 and over are economically active, which is well above the England average (60.9%).
 - The housing stock is predominantly detached, accounting for 58% of housing, with very high levels of owner occupation (78% against an England average of 61%). The proportion of social rented housing (8%) is half the national average.
 - Car ownership is high, with 45% of households having access to at least two cars. The England average is 35%.
- 2.42 Hastingwood is the least populated part of the Parish sitting just south of the major settlement of Harlow within the northern most part of the Parish. Hastingwood is very disjointed, split by the M11 and consisting of mainly open agricultural land, with very small irregular settlements set around Hastingwood Road, Mill Street, Harlow Common Road, London Road, Park Close and Foster Street.
- 2.43 Despite its size Hastingwood has three pubs, as well as the Hastingwood Village Hall, an allotment site and St Clare's Hospice.
- 2.44 A key node that dominates the area is the substantial oval roundabout at Junction 7 of the M11 (known locally as either the Hastingwood, Harlow or M11 roundabout). This connects the A414, the B1393 and Hastingwood Road, providing links to London, Cambridge and Harlow and the surrounding settlements of Hastingwood, North Weald village and Thornwood. The Hastingwood Roundabout is often very busy and regularly congested.
- 2.45 The M11 cuts through the centre of Hastingwood, acting as a clear barrier linking two distinctly separate areas. Roads which form the main settlement areas including Harlow Common, Mill Street and Hastingwood Road are known locally to be used as a rat run when the Hastingwood roundabout is congested.

- 2.46 A network of public rights of way connect the settlements of Hastingwood with Harlow and provide links to the surrounding rural landscape. The Stort Valley Way and Forest Way are long distance recreational trails, with the Stort Valley Way crossing the M11 at the southern end of Harlow Park. Forest Way crosses the M11 along Harlow Common road and leads from Harlow Common, around Mark Bushes and south through Epping Forest. Both trails cross agricultural fields and wooded landscape on well-used trodden earth tracks or lanes with a sense of relative tranquillity away from the M11.
- 2.47 The area is primarily agricultural with farm complexes with areas of large, wooded parks namely Mark Bushes, Latton Park and Harlow Park.
- 2.48 There are a number of commercial ventures surrounding the Hastingwood Roundabout and the A414 including Harlow Garden Centre, a fast food restaurant, two petrol stations and a van sales store.
- 2.49 Small units offered for commercial use are also scattered throughout the Hastingwood settlements.
- 2.50 To the east of Hastingwood lies Latton Priory (NHLE 1017386) – the remains of an Augustinian Priory of St. John the Baptist dating to the medieval period at what is now Latton Priory Farm.

Proposals for growth in North Weald Bassett

- 2.51 The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for development within the development period. However, Epping Forest District Council proposes significant levels of growth and have allocated the following development as part of the Epping Forest Local Plan (see Appendix A for the location of these allocated sites):
- North Weald Village – 1,050 homes plus 5 traveller pitches
 - Thornwood - 172 homes
 - Latton Priory – 1,050 homes plus 5 traveller pitches, one hectare of new employment land for office and research and development uses and other facilities
 - North Weald Airfield - land for employment use (industrial, office, research and development and light industrial uses).

Masterplans

- 2.52 The following Masterplans have been commissioned and adopted by Epping Forest District Council:
- North Weald Masterplan, leading and informing the development of North Weald Village.
 - Latton Priory Strategic Masterplan, leading and informing the development of the Latton Priory.
 - North Weald Airfield Masterplan, leading and informing the development of North Weald Airfield.

Main issues and challenges in North Weald Bassett Parish

- 2.53 The proposed development identified in the Epping Forest Local Plan has presented a series of issues and challenges which the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address. These have been informed by the scale and nature of growth proposed for the area which will have a significant impact on North Weald Bassett as it is today.

- 2.54 Feedback from public consultations carried out across the Parish and conducted as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process identified that the most valued aspects of all of the individual communities include the village feel, its ruralness and countryside, and that it is a friendly, peaceful and quiet place to live.
- 2.55 The biggest challenge faced by the Neighbourhood Plan is finding a way to ensure that the level of proposed growth is able to integrate into our communities, so that both new and current residents are able to continue to enjoy the elements that make the Parish so well loved and valued. These include:
- i. Protecting and enhancing the village feel that is so valued by local residents
 - ii. Ensuring development reflects the locally distinctive character of each village
 - iii. Protecting local green spaces of value to residents
 - iv. Protecting walking connections to the countryside
- 2.56 There are also a number of issues that need to be addressed as part of this proposed growth, some of which do not fall within the power of a Neighbourhood Plan. However, this plan sets out what the community expect new development to both consider and, if necessary, provide. This includes:
- i. improved connectivity to Epping which minimises reliance on the private car;
 - ii. substantial improvement to the reliability and frequency of public transport, particularly linking to Epping Underground Station;
 - iii. improving public parking;
 - iv. addressing vehicle congestion issues at The Plain junction causing congestion issues along both the B181 from North Weald and B1393 from Thornwood;
 - v. public sporting facilities;
 - vi. more facilities for young people;
 - vii. more social facilities in Thornwood.
 - viii. Vehicle congestion issues at the M11 roundabout in Hastingwood.
- 2.57 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that new development not only maintains, but enhances the things valued most by residents, and addresses the issues that already cause problems and concerns.



3 OVERARCHING VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE PARISH

Parish Vision

- 3.1 In the Summer of 2018, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group carried out a Parish wide Survey of the local community. Over 48% of residents responded giving their views.
- 3.2 What was clear from this feedback was how each village within the Parish has its own issues causing concern, and their own priorities when considering how each village should grow.
- 3.3 Further public events were held in December 2018 and December 2019, and together with the results of the parish-wide consultation, have led to the following overall vision for the Parish North Weald Bassett:

“The settlements within North Weald Bassett parish will continue to be unique in nature, having their own personal identity, being great places to live with easy access to enjoy the open countryside. Future development will integrate into each settlement’s unique character and housing design, with improved sustainable transport links to neighbouring villages and towns and enhancing each area’s individual sense of community.”

- 3.4 The results of the community survey in 2025 confirmed that little had changed with respect to the community’s views, therefore the vision should remain the same.

Objectives

- 3.5 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:
 - Objective 1: To ensure new development contributes to, and respects, the unique ‘village feel’ in all three villages, particularly through high quality design.
 - Objective 2: That new development links with the existing communities in North Weald Bassett Parish on foot and by bicycle.
 - Objective 3: North Weald Bassett Parish’s green spaces of value are protected and access to the countryside for walkers and cyclists is both protected and enhanced.
 - Objective 4: That the need for new community facilities, including for sport and children’s play, social interaction, and open space are delivered.
 - Objective 5: That the heritage aspects of each individual village within the Parish of North Weald Bassett are preserved and enhanced, particularly for North Weald village, and that this heritage and character is reflected in any new development
 - Objective 6: That the detrimental impacts of vehicular traffic – including the increased traffic, congestion and parking – are addressed and minimised throughout the Parish as a whole.
 - Objective 7: That improved sustainable transport links to Epping from both Thornwood Common and North Weald village are created.
 - Objective 8: That development minimises its carbon emissions and its impact on the natural environment.
- 3.6 Due to the unique differences each area has, a vision has been created for each settlement. Today, Latton Priory comprises farmland within Hastingwood. Proposed development in the

Epping Forest Local Plan will create a new community within the parish and within the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town project. Therefore, a vision respecting the proposals has been designed alongside visions for the existing three villages.

North Weald Bassett Village

“North Weald village will continue to be a close-knit village with a strong sense of community. The village will become more sustainable through improved health, education, leisure and community facilities, alongside a strengthened range of shops and services, complemented by enhanced sustainable and public transport provision. Rich and distinctive military heritage links with North Weald Airfield will be strengthened and reflected in future development.”

Thornwood Common

“Thornwood will continue to be a small but vibrant community, with a strong sense of identity and great links to the countryside and Epping Forest. Improved sustainable access links to the new facilities at the neighbouring Latton Priory Development will increase accessibility to much needed community facilities and services. Well-designed development will contribute towards the creation of a central focal point for the settlement.”

Hastingwood

“Hastingwood will remain a small hamlet, with a diverse range of dwellings dispersed sporadically throughout the settlement, set in the open countryside. Improved sustainable cycling and walking routes will improve connectivity to neighbouring towns and villages providing residents with more choices and opportunities.”

Latton Priory

“In addition to being an integral part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, Latton Priory will have its own unique identity, providing first class education, health, leisure and community facilities, forging a strong sense of community ownership. It will be a place to live, work, and play.”

4 PARISH-WIDE POLICIES

- 4.1 The village feel within each of the villages of North Weald Bassett is a very strong feature of its appeal for the existing communities. The setting of the villages of North Weald, Thornwood Common and Hastingwood in attractive and accessible rural surrounds makes it easy to forget how close they are to the major centres of Harlow and London.
- 4.2 The Parish has a diverse range of character design and is a good example of how places change and evolve over hundreds of years. There is not one design style which fits the entire parish. However, there are certain patterns of development and design influences that can be identified and attributed to the different settlements. Within the Plan area the two primary areas of settlement, Thornwood Common and North Weald village, both remained dispersed in character until the 20th century. However, as the population of the areas increased, these settlements became more consolidated as modern housing was developed.
- 4.3 New development over the past 30 years has shown some good and bad examples of the impact of design on a community. Where the design of buildings, their layout and the provision of green spaces has taken its cues from the prevailing character of each village, it has served to enhance each area and has integrated well. Where development has been overbearing and created to simply fit a common design style that could be anywhere, it has detracted from that character with long lasting negative effects. Examples of this include parts of the Blenheim Square development in North Weald village, and the Forest Grove/Woodside development in Thornwood Common.
- 4.4 The significant new growth proposed over the plan period has highlighted to the community the importance of high-quality design. The Neighbourhood Plan, informed by the community engagement and its evidence base – including the Design Guidelines 2018 and Heritage and Character Assessment 2018¹ – has developed a series of design requirements, building on the ten characteristics of well-designed places as presented in the National Design Guide²:

Context – enhances the surroundings.
Identity – attractive and distinctive.
Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
Nature – enhanced and optimised.

Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
Uses – mixed and integrated.
Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
Resources – efficient and resilient.
Lifespan – made to last.

- 4.5 These characteristics have informed the development of design-related policies not only for the individual villages, but also for development more generally across the parish. This reflects the NPPF objective of achieving well designed places and the Epping Forest Local Plan.

¹ Both studies were undertaken by AECOM for North Weald Bassett Parish Council - <https://www.northweald-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) *National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places* - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/843468/National_Design_Guide.pdf

Specifically Policy DM9 (High quality design) requires development, through its design, to contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area.

4.6 The following policies should be applied to all new development in the Neighbourhood Area.

Materials

4.7 The buildings across the parish do not have a single predominant palette of materials. Part of the village character of North Weald and Thornwood villages is provided by the range of materials and styles that have been used, albeit with red brick – which complements the green landscape - predominating. What is noticeable is the common rhythm of design, assisted by the absence of ‘feature’ designs which use materials and styles that are very different to those prevailing in the village. This avoids the feeling of development which ‘grates’ against the characteristics of North Weald and Thornwood. Tempest Mead, a development in the mid-1990s, is a good example of the use of subtle materials which follows the Essex Design Guide.

4.8 Part of the reason why this pattern has developed is the limited amount of large-scale development over the past 30-40 years. The proposed development at North Weald village in the Epping Forest Local Plan will change that and therefore it is important that the palette of materials used helps to blend it in with the existing community.

Tempest Mead: a good example of a subtle palette of materials and quality render



4.9 The main settlement core of Thornwood Common (bounded by Woodside and the B1393 between Woodside and Weald Hall Lane, west of Duck Lane) has a high density of development, generally comprising one and two-storey detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, typically built using yellow stock bricks or rendered with red brick detailing, or entirely using red brick.

Pictures of appropriate materials used



- 4.10 The houses further from the centre of Thornwood Common typically have larger front gardens fronted by hedgerows and larger back gardens which border the hedgerows of the agricultural fields. The development along Woodside is more spread out than the centre of Thornwood Common. The houses are typically of red brick, rendered and weather boarded timber frame, which contribute positively to local distinctiveness of the area and have well vegetated front gardens including trees and large shrubs which integrate the houses into The Lower Forest. The wooded edge character is intimate and enclosed.
- 4.11 The materials used in developments in North Weald and Thornwood villages should be informed by the Design Guidelines 2018 and the Heritage and Character Assessment 2018. The Design Guidelines identify, for each location, appropriate types of materials for roofs, walls and ground.

POLICY GEN1: MATERIALS

New buildings should preserve and enhance the character of the traditional villages of North Weald, Thornwood and Hastingwood through the use of high quality, traditional durable materials and appropriate detailing. This should be informed by the Design Guidelines for North Weald Bassett 2018 and the North Weald Bassett Heritage and Character Assessment 2018 (or any successor documents).

Soft landscaping

- 4.12 There is no way round it – building new houses cannot be good for our environment. But the country needs more homes. This Neighbourhood Plan introduces policies to ensure new developments are designed to maximise the benefits they can bring to us and our countryside.
- 4.13 Each of the villages in the Parish has a strong connection with the surrounding countryside and agricultural landscape which, to varying degrees provides tree or hedge-lined backdrops creating a sense of openness to both the edges of the villages and within. This can particularly be seen where the land rises up to Ongar Park in North Weald, there are important inward views of the village and trees help to mask the rooflines, reducing the urbanised feel of the increase in size of the community.



- 4.14 Within the built-up area, trees and hedges on streets contribute to creating the character and pleasant feel of a neighbourhood, enhancing a sense of wellbeing. In addition they support local wildlife and strengthen biodiversity.
- 4.15 Aside from the environmental benefits, trees and streets contribute to creating the character and pleasant feel of a neighbourhood, enhancing a sense of wellbeing.

POLICY GEN2: SOFT LANDSCAPING

- A. New development should, where possible, retain existing mature trees and hedgerows that form an important visual landmark or are an important natural feature that provides a significant visual link between the village and the countryside.**
- B. New trees and hedging located on road frontages and footpaths should be laid out to ensure that canopy size allows for appropriate vehicular circulation sight lines.**

Residential parking

- 4.16 The village communities in North Weald Bassett feel very strongly that new development must provide adequate levels of car parking for residents. North Weald and its villages remain rural. Whilst the expectation of the strategic developments in the Local Plan are that they provide high levels of self-containment (in terms of the services they provide for their residents), the same requirement in the villages is unrealistic. Services are inevitably more limited and public transport is seen as being unreliable and infrequent. Dependence on the private car therefore remains, and this is not expected to change for the lifetime of this plan.
- 4.17 This is supported by the 2021 Census data. In Epping Forest district, 86% of households have access to at least one car, with 44% having access to two or more cars. In the villages, car availability is higher:
- North Weald – availability of at least 1 car is 89% and 2 or more cars is 49%.
 - Thornwood – availability of at least 1 car is 94% and 2 or more cars is 54%.
 - Hastingwood – availability of at least 1 car is 95% and 2 or more cars is 67%.
- 4.18 Currently the Essex County Council Parking Guidance³ is used as a starting point to inform development, with proposals then appraised on a case-by-case basis. The Local Plan proposes that a more locally focused approach to parking standards should be taken across the district, based on levels of car ownership, access to services and facilities and widening the use of ‘unallocated’ parking within larger developments. In the villages of North Weald, Thornwood and Hastingwood, the latter approach is not considered appropriate as this creates conflict amongst neighbours. In these locations it is considered that the most appropriate mitigation of on-street parking impacts is ensuring that the only unallocated parking is for visitors.
- 4.19 Developments that have been poorly designed in respect of car parking not only have a detrimental effect on the visual appearance of development but also create safety and access issues for a wide range of users such as children, people with impaired mobility and parents/guardians with prams.
- 4.20 The community considers that the examples of successful developments in terms of addressing parking needs are those where parking is provided directly at the front or sides of properties. This also has the effect of setting the front door of properties back from the street. Developments such as those referred to in paragraph 4.3 not only have front doors right on the street but narrow pavements and car ports to the rear of many properties. As a result,

³ Essex County Council (2024) *Essex Parking Guidance* (<https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/design-details/2024-essex-parking-guidance/>)

vehicles often park on the pavements, with the effect of a car-dominated feel with many pedestrian users restricted in their access.

Examples of a car-dominated development with restricted pedestrian access due to on-street parking



POLICY GEN3: RESIDENTIAL PARKING

- A. Development which includes residential parking is expected to meet the requirements Epping Forest Local Plan Policy T1 (Sustainable Transport Choices) and specifically the Essex County Council Parking Guidance 2024 (or any successor document). Unallocated parking should only be relied upon for visitor parking unless it can clearly be demonstrated that the impact of on-street parking can be fully mitigated.**
- B. New development should, where possible, provide parking for vehicles:
 - a. at the front of properties⁴;**
 - b. as close as reasonably possible to the entrance of the property;**
 - c. that keeps a line of sight between the property and the parking spaces.****
- C. Parking spaces at the front of properties should be softened with landscaping.**
- D. Parking courts (at the front, back, or in a nearby location) are generally not encouraged, but where necessary should ensure that they enhance their immediate environment through their layout, use of soft landscaping, and created alongside Secured by Design principles.**
- E. On-street parking and parking for visitors should be designed with clear unambiguous spaces delineated with materials or markings.**
- F. Visitor parking should be at the front of properties to encourage active places.**

⁴ For corner properties and flats/apartments, parking may be more appropriately provided at the side of a property.

Energy and resource efficiency through design

- 4.21 The Government commitment in law to a 100% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2050 – net zero carbon - is a major undertaking which will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities, to businesses and local and national government. Epping Forest District Council has set a commitment across the District to produce net zero carbon emissions by 2030.
- 4.22 For new homes to be '2030/2050 ready' means they should be built to have minimal energy use and net carbon emissions over the year because they are highly insulated, have low water demand and are fitted with or directly connected to renewable energy systems as well as triple glazed windows where appropriate.
- 4.23 At a national level, technical standards are in place which include new additional optional Building Regulations regarding water and access as well as a new national space standard (this is in addition to the existing mandatory Building Regulations). However, developers are strongly encouraged to make use of energy efficient materials and to consider high-efficiency alternative systems and facilities for development sites. In this context, the orientation of buildings can be important in order to make best use of available sunlight. Therefore, even if such provision of energy efficiency systems is not included as part of development, the design and layout should ensure that this can be retrofitted at a later date. As an example, development should be designed and laid out to ensure that as many of the roofs of new dwellings face as close to a southerly direction as possible and have a pitch that maximises their potential to receive solar energy. Therefore, at a subsequent time when the owner of the property wishes to put solar panels on the property, it will be ensured that the potential to generate renewable energy from solar is maximised.
- 4.24 There is an opportunity to improve and promote sustainability in the parish by:
- following basic passive environmental design in a fabric-first approach;
 - integrating renewable energy systems into new development, including existing and new public buildings;
 - reducing water consumption through grey water systems.
- 4.25 This builds on the policy framework provided by Policies DM19 (Sustainable Water Use) and DM20 (Low Carbon and Renewable Energy) in the Epping Forest Local Plan by specifically identifying design approaches which maximise the potential for development to address climate change. Ultimately the objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to encourage the most energy efficient development possible.
- 4.26 As part of the design of new development, it is important that provision is made for electric vehicle (EV) charging. Building Regulations now require all new development (including a change of use) with associated parking to provide EV charging points.

POLICY GEN4: ENERGY AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY THROUGH DESIGN

A. Development proposals, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, should demonstrate how the design of buildings and site layouts improves water efficiency and minimises consumption of energy, water, minerals, materials and

other natural resources in order to provide resilience to the effects of climate change.

- B. The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction including measures which minimise waste reduction, re-use and recycle minerals, and use sustainable materials, including in relation to their procurement and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions.**
- C. All developments should demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. New development will be supported where it is designed and built to be Net Zero Carbon (in operation) having regard to Policy NZ1 set out in the Greater Essex Planning Policy Position for Net Zero Carbon Development⁵. The following measures should be incorporated into development:**
 - a. Wherever possible, new buildings should be orientated to maximise the opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and reducing exposure to wind and other elements;**
 - b. Proposals involving both new and existing buildings should demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change for example by including measures such as solar shading, thermal mass, heating and ventilation of the building and appropriately coloured materials in areas exposed to direct sunlight, green and brown roofs, green walls, etc;**
 - c. The use of low embodied carbon materials, assessed through a Whole Life Cycle Carbon Assessment, should be prioritised. With regard to reducing upfront embodied carbon emissions from new development, reference should be made to the findings and recommended targets set out in the Essex Embodied Carbon Policy Study 2024⁶ (or any successor document);**
 - d. New residential development should seek to meet a target standard of 100 litres per person per day (l/p/d); and**
 - e. Use of trees and other planting, where appropriate as part of a landscape scheme, to provide shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets and to help to connect habitat, designed with native plants that are carefully selected, managed and adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions.**
- D. The sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency (including glazing) and renewable energy generation measures that serve historic buildings will be encouraged having regard to the Essex Design Guide, including the retrofitting of listed buildings, provided it safeguards their historic character and setting.**

⁵ <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/media/2954/net-zero-carbon-planning-policy-for-greater-essex-november-2023.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/media/2981/essex-embodied-carbon-policy-study-technical-evidence-june-2024.pdf>

Lighting

- 4.27 The NPPF requires development to limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
- 4.28 The best use of artificial light is about getting the right light, in the right place and providing light at the right time. New development should ensure that lighting schemes will not cause unacceptable levels of light pollution particularly in intrinsically dark areas. These can be areas very close to the countryside or where dark skies are enjoyed. With North Weald Parish being a set of rural communities, there is the opportunity to enjoy darker skies than in more urban areas. Clearly the significant growth of the village will mean that, unless lighting is properly managed, this opportunity will diminish.
- 4.29 The needs of particular individuals or groups such as pedestrians and cyclists should be considered where appropriate. Certainly the objective of the Neighbourhood Plan to develop routes that encourage more walking and cycling is not intended to only be for during daylight hours. Equally the importance of using lighting to make people feel safe is important to the use of these routes after dark. Schemes designed for those more likely to be older or visually impaired may require higher levels of light and enhanced contrast, together with more control, as the negative effects of glare also increase with age.
- 4.30 Policy GEN5 builds on the requirements of Local Plan Policy DM21 (Local Environmental Impacts, Pollution and Land Contamination) which resists development which leads to unacceptable local environmental impacts including light pollution.

POLICY GEN5: LIGHTING

- A. Proposals for development should respect the dark skies that are characteristic of the parish. Lighting proposals should be proportionate to their intended purpose or use.**
- B. Other than householder development, development proposals should include a statement explaining how any external lighting (including its luminosity) has regard to preserving the dark night skies in the neighbouring area. Development proposals which incorporate highway lighting will only be supported if required by the Highways Authority for reasons of road safety.**
- C. Lighting in close proximity to North Weald Airfield should be designed to safeguard the safety of all aircraft.**

5 NORTH WEALD VILLAGE

- 5.1 The previous chapters of this Neighbourhood Plan highlight how history has informed village life today, as well as the specific issues that the community wishes for new development to address through its design requirements. In particular, this relates to the large scale residential development proposed in the Epping Forest Local Plan.
- 5.2 All residential development at North Weald village should integrate seamlessly with the existing village, respecting its character and military heritage, enhancing the already present and strong community and village feel, providing an enriched sense of place and purpose whilst also respecting the amenity of residents who currently have open views of the countryside.
- 5.3 The following policies provide a mix of design requirements which should be applied to both large scale development (including any Masterplan led development) as well smaller more locally focused development. A number of these policies align with Policy DM9 (High Quality Design) in the Epping Forest Local Plan but are more specific to the areas in question. They have been informed by the Design Guidelines for North Weald Bassett 2018 report. The development of design codes for the strategic development (as required by Policy DM9) should adopt these design principles as fundamental part of those codes and only build on them where necessary for the purpose of reflecting good design and further enhancing the heritage and character of the area.

Street and building layouts

- 5.4 Streets are places where people walk, meet and interact. For example, the shops on the High Road in North Weald village are an important community hub where people meet going about their daily business. Because of the compact nature of the village, people love to do this on foot but the High Road is busy and large buses can make it feel hostile to the pedestrian. As a result, walking – by adults going about their business and by children going to school - is not as common as the community would like. Walking routes are also not circular, so journeys are 'out and back' – people would like to link shopping, school run and leisure into single walking trips, but the lack of routes do not make this easy.
- 5.5 The layout of new development should create routes which link to meaningful destinations and also link these destinations to one another, where possible, in circular walking routes. In the case of the North Weald village development proposed in the Epping Forest Local Plan, this means the new local centre, St Andrew's Primary School and any community uses provided on or near the site. The new development should also provide walking and cycle access to the current shops in the High Road as well as North Weald Airfield.



POLICY NW1: CONNECTED STREET LAYOUTS

New streets should:

- a. have a connected pattern that creates easy and safe pedestrian movement;**
- b. ensure connections for pedestrians to the new North Weald local centre, St Andrew's Primary School and new community uses provided on or near the site;**
- c. seek to be laid out where possible in a linear form;**
- d. follow the topography of the site;**
- e. show slight variations from one street to another;**
- f. create a sense of openness by retaining the traditional village layout of North Weald.**

5.6 North Weald village has a strong connection with the RAF due to the long military presence from the war and interwar periods up to 1950. This can be seen in the style of many of the houses in the village and is recognised in the Heritage and Character Assessment. The Design Guidelines for North Weald Bassett recommends that new development should draw influence from this heritage and should have a traditional village layout.



POLICY NW2: BUILDING LAYOUT

- A. New development should have a traditional village layout, with medium density⁷ built form to create a sense of openness. New buildings should be sympathetic to the existing building style and form in the village and should respect the existing scale, height and materials of the surrounding development.**
- B. Residential properties should:**
- a. create a sense of open space by being well set back from the street;**
 - b. face the road on which they are located;**
 - c. have a low to medium density in their built form.**

Building heights, styles and materials

- 5.7 Development in North Weald village which the community finds visually the most appealing and which complements the traditional village layout has been greatly informed by the traditional Essex Design Guide form and design. New buildings are typically two storeys brick and rarely exceed 2.5 storeys. Blenheim Square is an example of a recent development where building heights were mostly above two storeys and this creates a feeling of cramped enclosure out of keeping with the rural village feel of lower development elsewhere. It is accepted that flats or apartments may need to be higher but this should respect the historic built environment and avoid the higher areas of land towards the centre (near the Memorial Playing Fields) and to the east of the site so as not to dominate the roofscape of the development.

POLICY NW3: BUILDING HEIGHTS AND STYLES

New buildings should:

- a. be sympathetic to the existing building style and form in the village, informed by the traditional Essex Design Guide form and design;**
- b. respect the existing scale, height and materials of the surrounding development;**
- c. be influenced by well designed development which reflects the heritage and character of the Parish;**
- d. have a variety of hip and pitched roofs with chimneys punctuating the roof line;**
- e. for houses typically be 2 storeys and should not generally exceed 2.5 storeys;**
- f. for flats or apartments, not generally exceed 3 storeys in height and should not be located on higher areas of land than their surroundings;**
- g. not materially impact the current or future aviation operations at North Weald Airfield.**

Landscaping and green buffers

- 5.8 One of the attractions for many people of life living around the edges of North Weald village is the green spaces at the front and rear of their houses. Whilst new development will undoubtedly reduce this, it should not be eliminated. Instead, green buffers should be maintained which will provide continuing green space for those properties and could also be

⁷ As a guide to what represents 'medium density' the Blenheim Square development is considered to be high density and out of keeping with the traditional North Weald village pattern of development.

used to provide safer walking and cycling routes through the incorporation of paths. Development at Beaulieu Park in Chelmsford provides a good example of how a green buffer has been created between development areas, also incorporating a walking and cycling route.

Beaulieu Park, Chelmsford – example of a green buffer and walking/cycling route



Example what a green buffer could look like - rear of Queens Road and Oak Piece



POLICY NW4: GREEN BUFFERS

- A. New development adjacent to existing built-up areas should retain or provide a green buffer. This green buffer should be sufficiently wide to accommodate:
 - a. the planting of avenues of tree species which, when mature, have a large canopy and root structure;
 - b. recreational facilities such as benches and water features;
 - c. wide pedestrian and cycling paths.**
- B. Where a green buffer is faced by the rear of properties that are part of an existing development, new buildings should be designed to overlook it, in order to create active frontages and provide natural surveillance.**

Public realm and open spaces

- 5.9 The parts of the community in North Weald village which are seen as working well are places that encourage social interaction and where residents and visitors feel safe because of natural surveillance. Public spaces have active frontages that face the space and this fosters social interaction – Park Close is an example. If such spaces also provide for children’s play (such as shown in the picture below), this further enhances the feeling of safety for parents to let their children out to play together.



POLICY NW5: PUBLIC SPACES IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- A. Public spaces in residential areas should:
 - a. be well defined (as spaces open to the public) and accessible to all;
 - b. ensure the main facades and entrances of adjacent buildings face the public space (active frontages);
 - c. provide space for children’s play and, where there is sufficient space, play equipment;
 - d. where possible, provide direct pedestrian linkages into the surrounding countryside, particularly where this links up with existing Public Rights of Way.**

B. Signage and wayfinding points should be used to signal different places and areas and, where possible, should draw influence from the strong military heritage of the village in their design.

C. Landscaping or open water features within new public spaces which may increase the risk of a bird strike to aircraft using the airfield will not be supported.

Views

- 5.10 The general open views across the rural landscape are a feature of the communities in the Parish and are part of what makes the Parish special. North Weald village benefits from expansive and panoramic views across the whole village. At a finer grained scale, there are numerous glimpses of the rural landscape beyond the village.

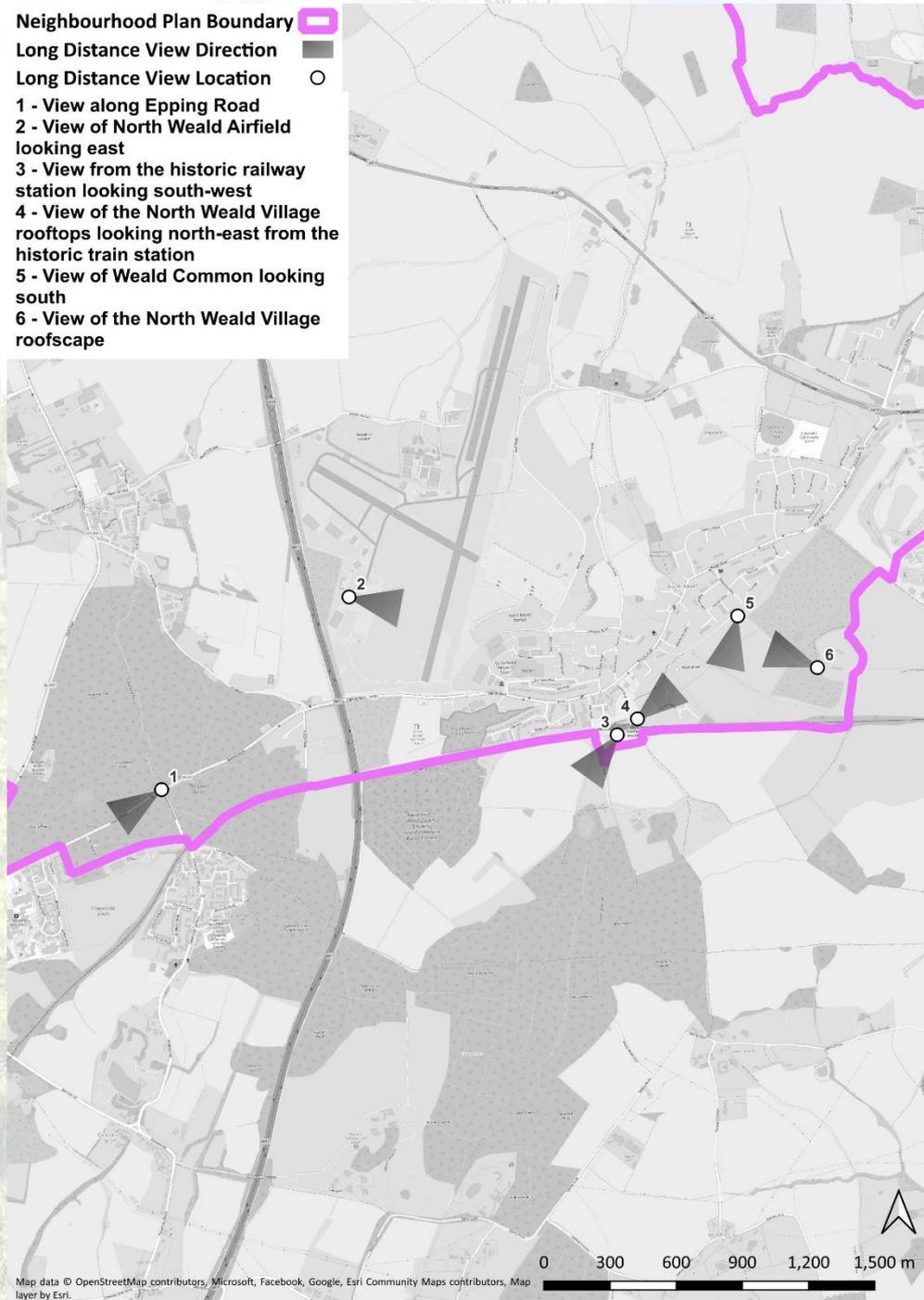
View along the B181 enclosed by two-storey houses showing the rural landscape beyond



- 5.11 As detailed within the North Weald Bassett Heritage and Character Assessment (p.11), the topography creates a 40-metre height difference between the north-west and south-west areas within the North Weald Bassett Neighbourhood Plan area. This allows for important long distance views across the rural landscape. This feature helps to hide the urban expanse of Harlow and Epping from most of the area. Similarly, it makes views to and from the central areas of North Weald village particularly sensitive. There are also panoramic views across the Airfield towards the surrounding distant wooded skylines and vice-versa.
- 5.12 The built form of North Weald village has strong connections with the surrounding agricultural landscape which provides tree or hedge lined backdrops to views both out of and into the village, and a sense of openness to the edges of the village. The changes in topography, with the land rising up to Ongar Park Wood, create particular visual interest. Views into the settlements are as important and those views looking out of the settlement.
- 5.13 The North Weald Bassett Design Guidelines identified a series of valued long distance views:
1. View along Epping Road (B181)
 2. View of North Weald Airfield looking north-east
 3. View from the historic railway station looking south-west
 4. View of the North Weald Village rooftops looking north-west from the historic train station

- 5. View of Weald Common looking south
 - 6. View of the North Weald Village roofscape.
- 5.14 These views are shown in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Long distance views around North Weald Village and North Weald Airfield



Example of a long distance view which has been retained through design and layout



Example of how layout can maintain visual connection with the countryside



5.15 Protecting views through sensitive layouts, designs and landscaping are particularly important where the land rises and makes areas more visible.

POLICY NW6: VIEWS AND VISTAS

A. New development should respect urban views of the roofscape of surrounding residential areas, long distance and panoramic views towards the surrounding countryside and views from the surrounding countryside towards the developed area.

B. The following long distance views, as shown in Figure 5.1 and on the Policies Map, should be preserved, with development ensuring that no significant harm is created to the view:

- 1. View along Epping Road (B181)**
- 2. View of North Weald Airfield looking north-east**
- 3. View from the historic railway station looking south-west**
- 4. View of the North Weald Village rooftops looking north-west from the historic train station**
- 5. View of Weald Common looking south**
- 6. View of the North Weald Village roofscape.**

Where appropriate, this should be demonstrated through a landscape and visual impact appraisal.

C. General views of open countryside should be incorporated as a design feature of large scale new development where possible.

D. Development should soften rooflines through effective siting in relation to existing trees or the planting of new trees.

Sustainable linkages

- 5.16 The high levels of car use both from and going through North Weald village will be exacerbated without meaningful improvements to walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure. The need for an improved, reliable bus service is addressed in section 9. However, the nature of local movements is that these could easily be undertaken on foot and by bicycle as part of circular routes, providing exercise and social interaction at the same time as undertaking necessary journeys. It is therefore important that the new development in North Weald village provides routes and infrastructure which provides a genuine alternative to the private car. This is for both local journeys, not only within the new development itself but serving the existing community and commercial facilities in the village as well as into the open countryside for recreation, but also for journeys to Epping.



- 5.17 This is also important in respect of access to North Weald Airfield. The allocation in the Epping Forest Local Plan of employment land (for offices, research and development, light industrial, industrial and warehousing use) means that strategic traffic to the Airfield will increase significantly. For the local community of North Weald, the opportunity to access jobs and leisure activities by means other than the car will be an important way of minimising overall traffic growth.

POLICY NW7: WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

A. New development should provide walking and cycling connections both within the new development and to the existing residential and commercial areas in North Weald village. Specifically, such routes should provide connections to:

- a. the new local centre;**
- b. the existing local centre in North Weald village;**
- c. St Andrew's Primary School;**
- d. new community uses;**
- e. North Weald Airfield, including the new employment areas; and**
- f. the surrounding countryside.**

B. Cycle and pedestrian movement throughout the entire development should be designed to be:

- a. spacious, with wide paths for multiple users;
- b. attractively landscaped;
- c. well overlooked to provide a feeling of safety, avoiding the use of alleyways to connect routes;
- d. well signposted, both to and along the routes.

C. Where possible, circular cycle and pedestrian routes should be provided in order to maximise their use for recreation.

Public parking

Public parking in the existing Village Centre

- 5.18 Having sufficient car parking that meets the need of both residents and visitors, whilst not negatively affecting the appearance and character of a place is a significant challenge. As explained earlier, North Weald village has higher levels of car ownership than the district average. This reflects its rural location and the limited number of shops and services within the village.
- 5.19 There is currently very little available public parking for the few shops and businesses located along B181 North Weald High Road, which causes frequent problems both on the High Road through on-street parking, as well for the private parking provision owned by North Weald Village Hall. There are 8 public parking spaces adjacent to the North Weald Village Hall available for those wishing to use Weald Common or the Play Park, however the remainder of the spaces are for private parking only by patrons of the North Weald Village Hall. These spaces are frequently used by visitors to the local shops.
- 5.20 The continued viability of these small shops and business along the High Road does to some degree rely on the ability of visitors being able to park their vehicles whilst visiting these shops. Consultation with local residents showed overall support for increased parking by North Weald Village Hall and by the village shops.
- 5.21 In order to mitigate the impact of on-street parking in the village centre (a requirement of Local Plan Policy T1 – Sustainable Transport Choices) and minimise the number of residents that make longer distance car journeys to access everyday shopping and leisure needs, it is necessary to provide a small amount of additional public car parking in the centre of the village. This level must be of an appropriate scale to mitigate the existing impacts of on-street parking as opposed to attracting new trips into the village.

POLICY NW8: PUBLIC PARKING IN THE CENTRE OF NORTH WEALD

- A. Proposals which result in improved parking provision to support local shops and business along the High Street in North Weald will be supported. Such proposals must demonstrate that additional off-road public parking is of a scale necessary to appropriately mitigate the existing impact of on-street parking and will not significantly increase the generation of new trips. Proposals must ensure that they retain safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.**
- B. Proposal which result in the loss of any parking currently used by members of the public to access local shops and services will not be supported.**

Public parking in the new Village Centre

- 5.22 The proposed local centre as part of the new development at North Weald village will provide an important complementary offer to the shops on the High Street. The intention would be that people could therefore undertake more shopping activity locally than at present. One potential threat of having two small centres would however be that people would drive between the two centres, causing congestion from very short journeys. Whilst improved circular walking and cycling routes will help to provide an alternative to the private car, this must be complemented by the provision of only a limited amount of vehicular parking at the new local centre. This will also have the effect of limiting the potential for large groups to congregate, particularly late at night, with the potential for anti-social behaviour.



POLICY NW9: PARKING AT THE NEW NORTH WEALD LOCAL CENTRE

- A. Proposals for public parking at the new local centre in North Weald should be designed – in terms of its layout, landscaping and operation - to limit anti-social behaviour. The provision of large, open car parks is discouraged.**
- B. Parking provision for bicycles should be provided in a visible location close to the facilities at the local centre.**

Epping-Ongar Railway

- 5.23 In 1949, the Epping to Ongar Branch Railway became part of the London Underground Central Line, however, this closed in 1994. In 2004, a 6.5-mile stretch was opened as a heritage railway, with North Weald Station at its centre. There is currently no operational rail connection between the heritage rail line and the London Underground Central Line track at Epping, however the Railway runs local shuttle bus services. The railway attracts many visitors from across Essex and is supported by Epping Forest District Council as being a tourist attraction.
- 5.24 Whilst the railway itself, and its important historical connection to the village is valued, there are wider implications that need due consideration. Many local residents wish to see the railway reopened as a commuter link to London, however this could create as many problems as it solves, specifically in terms of parking with commuters potentially driving to North Weald village to use the service. In addition, intensification of the tourism aspect of this facility would exacerbate an already existing issue of parking on local roads, especially along Station Road and the entrance to Tempest Mead.



POLICY NW10: EPPING-ONGAR RAILWAY

- A. Proposals which enhance and improve tourism for the Epping Ongar Railway will be supported, subject to appropriate mitigation measures being in place, specifically regarding any associated parking.**
- B. Proposals for a pedestrian and/or cycle link, and/or 'Rail Trail' between North Weald Station and Epping Station, running alongside the Heritage Railway Line, will be supported.**
- C. Where required by Epping Forest Local Plan Policy T1 (Sustainable Transport Choices) in respect of the Epping Ongar Railway, the Transport Assessment or Statement should specifically address the impact upon parking along Station Road, Tempest Mead and other local roads.**

St Andrew's Primary School

- 5.25 The village of North Weald is served by St Andrew's Church of England (CE) Primary School, which has a history dating back to 1678. The school was refurbished in 1960's to provide more modern facilities, which included building a hall and stage, as well as installing a swimming pool. Many children who attend St Andrew's today, are the second or even third generation of the same family to have attended the school at its current site. Many North Weald residents feel a strong connection with the school, with a clear fondness and historic

attachment being felt throughout the community, contributing to achieving a sense of community and the village feel. In essence, St Andrew's CE Primary School with its historic links, plays a big part in North Weald being recognised as a village.

- 5.26 A new primary school is proposed as part of the North Weald Bassett Masterplan. The location of St Andrew's Primary School means that the development of the Masterplan also provides an opportunity to improve accessibility to the school. At present the only access to the school, either by foot or vehicle, is via the south access of School Green Lane and Beamish Close, both of which are unsuitable in terms of vehicular access.
- 5.27 This also becomes an issue on the occasion of school trips where a coach is required for transportation. There is no public parking at the school, nor is there any allocated drop off zone for children arriving by car.
- 5.28 In addition, a new fit-for-purpose vehicular drop-off point should be provided, which could also act as an area for school buses or coaches.
- 5.29 The design of the Masterplan area creates an opportunity to encourage the new residents to take an attractive walking route to school. Whilst no detailed designs have been presented, there may be a situation where such improvements require the demolition of existing buildings. In particular the loss of the school's swimming pool would not be acceptable and any such solution would therefore require appropriate re-provision of this facility.
- 5.30 This should ensure that there is no exacerbation of the parking and vehicular issues currently experienced. The test in Policy NW11 in relation to ensuring 'no significant harmful impacts' must recognise that at present there are harmful impacts arising from traffic movements related to school traffic.

POLICY NW11: ST ANDREW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

A. Proposals to improve access to St Andrew's Primary School will be strongly supported where they sufficiently address the following matters:

- a. Ensuring there would be no significant harmful impacts in terms of vehicular movements along School Green Lane and Beamish Close.
- b. Seek to provide a new vehicular access/drop-off zone to the north of the school site.
- c. Seek to provide an additional pedestrian access north of the site.
- d. Proposals which exacerbate vehicular movements along School Green Lane and Beamish Close will be strongly resisted.

B. Proposals to improve access to the school that would result in the loss of the school facilities including the swimming pool, will only be acceptable if appropriate re-provision of these facilities is made.

North Weald Airfield

- 5.31 North Weald Airfield, currently owned by Epping Forest District Council, is recognised by the community as an important part of its history and identity.
- 5.32 The Airfield and surrounding roads are home to a Grade II listed Control Tower, the North Weald Airfield Museum located just off Hurricane Way, in front of which is the Debt of Honour and the Norwegian Stone presented to the village by Princess Astrid of Norway.

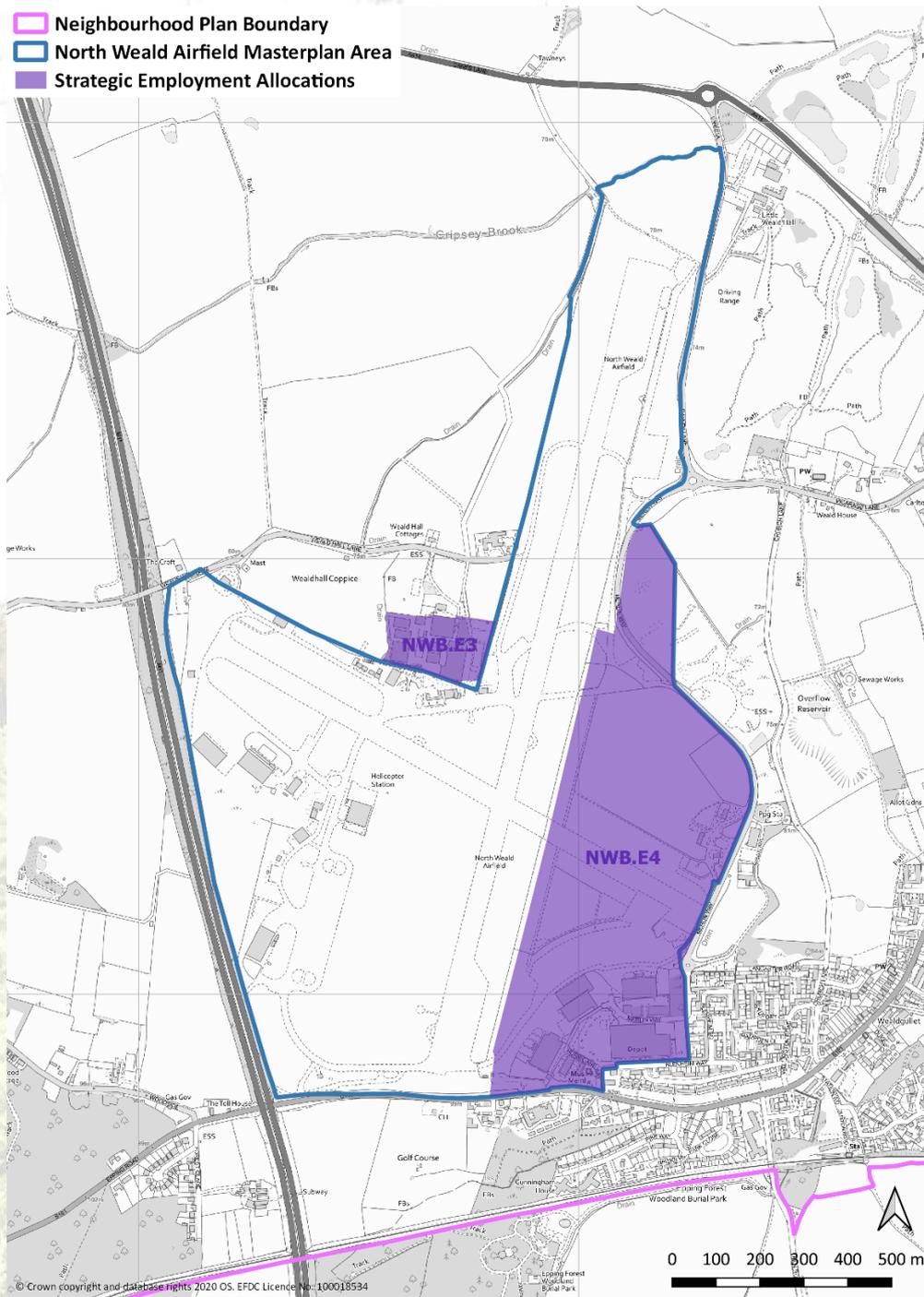
- 5.33 Norway House, a former officers' mess constructed in the 1920's associated with the former RAF North Weald lies opposite the historical entrance to the Airfield – Hurricane Way, presently used as temporary accommodation for homeless or displaced people
- 5.34 A strong military influence can be seen throughout North Weald Village, both in terms of design and referencing, i.e. Blenheim Square, Tempest Mead, Beamish Close and Pike Way.



- 5.35 The allocation in the Epping Forest Local Plan allocates part of the land for employment use on the eastern side of the Airfield, with the western side remaining an active airfield (see Figure 5.2). The continued use of North Weald Airfield for aviation and flying is strongly supported by the local community, and development must recognise not only the important historic relevance of the Airfield but also protect its future to ensure flying activities can continue.
- 5.36 What is important as a minimum is that the Airfield continues to be a viable ongoing concern for aviation activities over the plan period and beyond. Paragraph 111(f) of the NPPF recognises the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields, "taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs."

Figure 5.2: North Weald Airfield Masterplan Area

- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
- North Weald Airfield Masterplan Area
- Strategic Employment Allocations



POLICY NW12: NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

- A. The continued use and enhancement of North Weald Airfield for aviation, flying and all related activities will be supported. Recreational aviation will be encouraged.**
- B. Development proposals for North Weald Airfield must demonstrate how they will not harm existing aviation uses.**
- C. New commercial buildings must be of a height, mass and layout that does not materially impact on the current or future aviation operation of the airfield.**
- D. In meeting the requirements of Epping Forest Local Plan Policy T1 (Sustainable Transport Choices), development proposals should provide improved pedestrian and cycle links between North Weald Airfield and new development in North Weald village.**
- E. Proposals for new employment use on the Airfield should be designed to ensure heavy goods vehicle access is provided from Rayley Lane/Merlin Way to the north eastern side of the Airfield.**
- F. The use of the Airfield for heritage and military events will be supported.**
- G. The use of the Grade II listed Control Tower for local community or public use, including heritage and educational events, will be encouraged.**

6 THORNWOOD COMMON

Community Hub

- 6.1 Thornwood lacks a central focal point for the community, to serve the local population. The creation of a focal point is supported in general terms by the Epping Forest Local Plan vision for Thornwood, which states:

“Thornwood will become a more self-sustaining village with improved provision of services, transport infrastructure and amenities to cater for the existing and future community and reducing reliance on other settlements. Well-designed development will contribute towards the creation of a central focal point for the village.”

- 6.2 Epping Forest Local Plan Policy P11 for Thornwood recognises that, “Development proposals in Thornwood will be expected to deliver and/or contribute proportionately towards infrastructure items including...community uses.” The Infrastructure Delivery Plan⁸ which supports the Epping Forest Local Plan identifies the need for a small community space for Thornwood. The community has identified the need for a built or improved facility which can provide a ‘one-stop shop’ for a range of services and needs in the village. These include:

- Meeting room(s) for hire by local businesses and sole traders that work from home
- Communal workspaces where local people can come to work
- A community meeting space for hire by local community groups
- A community café
- A community shop
- Space/rooms which could be used by local medical practitioners to provide services to the community.

- 6.3 The IDP reflects some of these needs, noting that it could meet the requirements of a combined library, youth service and community hall. As is noted in Local Plan Policy P11, the cost of this provision (which as the IDP notes needs to include land) should be contributed to proportionately by development sites in Thornwood. This will include the two residential sites in Thornwood that are allocated in the Epping Forest Local Plan (THOR.R1 – land at Tudor House and THOR.R2 – land west of High Road).

POLICY TW1: COMMUNITY HUB FOR THORNWOOD

The provision of a community hub within the settlement area of Thornwood (the area inset from the Green Belt) will be strongly supported, subject to demonstrating how it will address provision of the following needs:

- 1. Meeting room(s)**
- 2. A community meeting space**
- 3. A community café**
- 4. A community shop**
- 5. Adequate car parking for such facilities.**

⁸ Arup (2020) *Epping Forest Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Part B Report: Infrastructure Delivery Schedule*, for Epping Forest District Council



7 LATTON PRIORY

- 7.1 In the north west of the Parish is an area known locally as Latton Priory. Although technically falling within Hastingwood, this area of land has a stronger relationship with the settlements of Harlow and Thornwood.
- 7.2 Latton Priory, a scheduled monument (NHLE 1017386), comprises the remains of an Augustinian Priory of St. John the Baptist dating to the medieval period at what is now Latton Priory Farm.
- 7.3 Forming part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) proposals, and as detailed in the Epping Forest Local Plan, a large expanse of this area is proposed for development.
- 7.4 Protecting views through sensitive layouts, designs and landscaping are particularly important where the land rises and makes areas more visible. The emerging masterplan for Latton Priory recognises the ridge line running through the site and proposes to ensure development doesn't impact upon this by retaining natural green space and providing sports pitches on the southern part of the masterplan area. This is an important principle which should be retained. This has been fully reinforced by Epping Forest Local Plan Policy SP4 (Garden Communities) which requires the land to the south of the 'build-to' line within the masterplan area to be retained for public open space 'or other appropriate uses'. The requirement to leave the land leading up this 'build-to' line open is important because this is a historic ridgeline so built development up the ridgeline would have a significant detrimental impact. 'Other appropriate uses' will therefore need to be considered carefully.
- 7.5 Once built, this area's physical relationship to Harlow will be strengthened, and its proximity to Epping London Underground station (just over three miles) is expected to attract a large commuter population travelling along the B1393.
- 7.6 Although a sustainable transport system is proposed for within the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, the prospect of such a system outside the settlement of Latton Priory going towards Epping is only regarded as a 'possible future link'. Without new sustainable transport from the Latton Priory development going south through Thornwood Common and ideally North Weald toward Epping, further exacerbation of the problems experienced at the Plain Junction in Epping, and along the B1393 through Thornwood Common will undoubtedly occur.

POLICY LP1: LATTON PRIORY

A. If proposals to meet the requirements of Epping Forest Local Plan Policy SP4 (Garden Communities) relating to the 'build-to' line propose any form of 'appropriate use' other than public open space, then it must be clearly demonstrated that this use will not have a detrimental impact on the historic ridgeline.

B. Proposals to deliver sustainable transport options that improve links between Latton Priory, Hastingwood, North Weald and Epping will be strongly supported.

8 LOCAL GREEN SPACES

- 8.1 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to them. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 107 of the NPPF says that the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
 - local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 8.2 Throughout the Parish there are a number of open spaces which are valued by local residents for various reasons including recreational value such as dog walking and space for exercise.
- 8.3 As part of the Neighbourhood Planning process, all open spaces have been considered, together with identifying whether any other statutory designation or protection is afforded to each space. Where a locally valued green space is protected by other legislation, it has not been included for designation within this plan. However, these areas often are valued as much as those designated within this plan.
- 8.4 The following areas are considered to fulfil all of the criteria of the NPPF for local green space designation.

1. Weald Common (part)

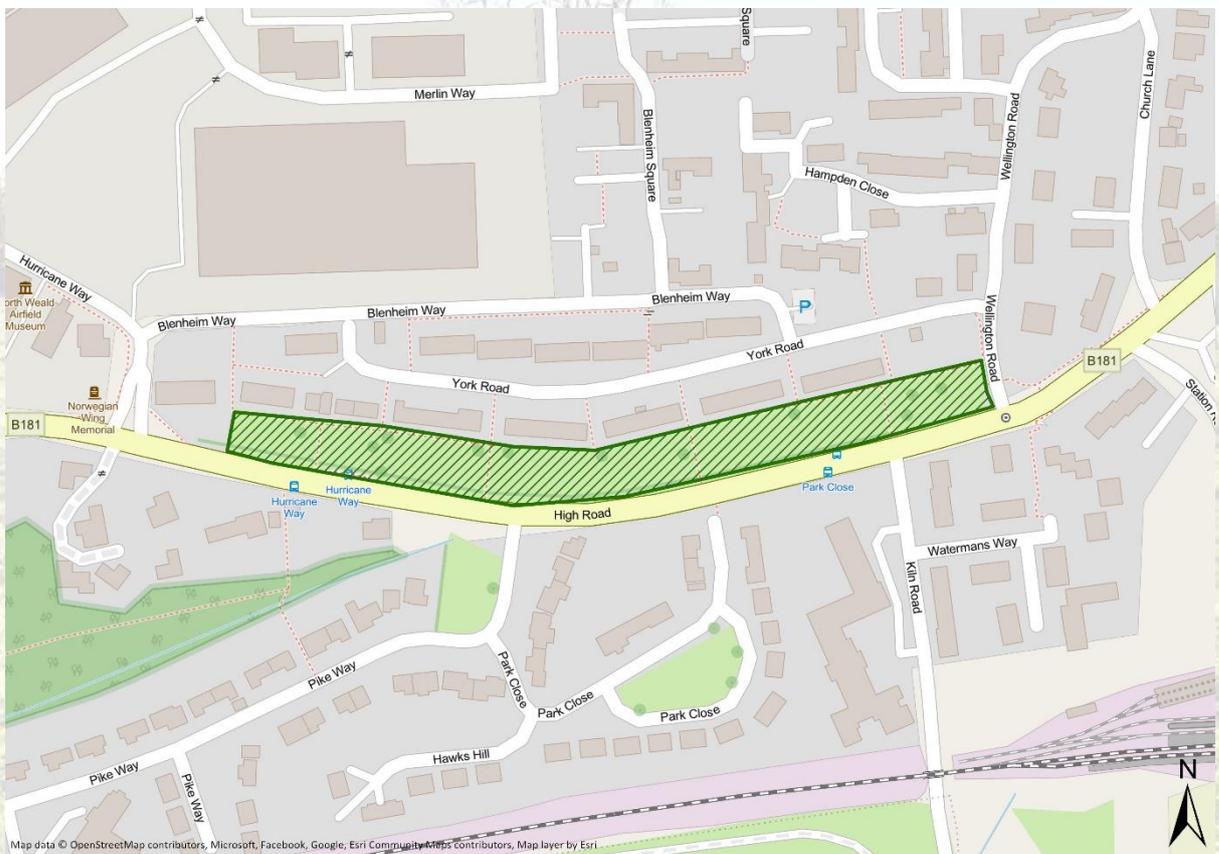


- 8.5 This part of Weald Common is an area of 0.80 hectares located adjacent to the residential areas in the south of North Weald village. It is connected to these residential areas by a footpath.
- 8.6 Weald Common, originally part of the Ongar Park Estate, was transferred to the Parish Council in 1998 as part of a legal agreement. It was provided for members of the public to use as a public park supported by a small section of parking for the general public to use when visiting the Common (although the parking is not located on the Common itself).
- 8.7 The entire space known as Weald Common is hugely valued by the local community in its entirety. It is split into two distinct sections, the first being the play area and football pitch, the second being the newly created Weald Common Wood. However, in its entirety it could be classified as an expansive tract of land which would make it ineligible for a Green Space designation. Therefore, the space designated is that which contains the children play park, links between public footpaths, and the football pitch. The children's play park provides one of the most popular and valued play facilities in the area. If this was lost, then it would remove one of the main reasons why families with children use the Common. Similarly, the football pitch enables local youths to play informal football. With the growth in population planned for the wider area, the importance of these facilities is enhanced greatly.
- 8.8 The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The justification for this space being designated specifically as a Local Green Space is different and reflects the importance of the facilities provided. These facilities could be lost through proposals that would not necessarily involve the space losing its Green Belt status as well, therefore the Local Green Space designation is necessary.

Rationale for designation

- Area provides a well-used public play area, together with a football pitch with goals for public use.
- Area is regularly used by dog walkers, as part of a wider walk.
- Area links the Tempest Mead area of open District land to the wider open countryside walks.
- Area is one of only a few public open spaces for residents of all ages to enjoy for recreation.
- Fantastic connection to wildlife.

2. Green in front of York Road

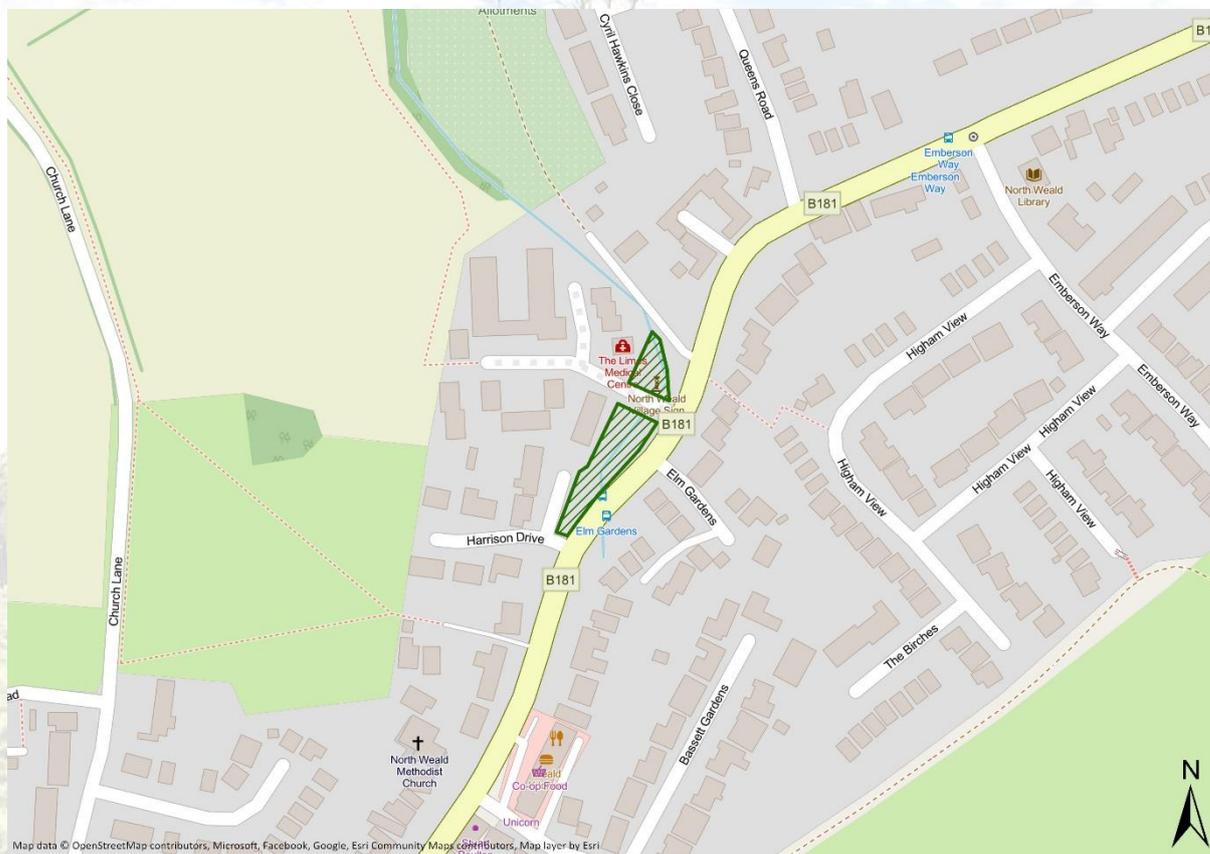


- 8.9 York Road Green is a 0.98-hectare area located at the heart of the community in the south of North Weald village. It is easily accessible from the B181 Epping Road which is the main road through the village.
- 8.10 York Road Green has, over the years, grown to become a well-used, well-loved strip of green between the frontage of properties backing on to York Road and the High Road (B181).
- 8.11 These houses were originally built for use by the York and Lancaster Regiments in the 1960s (hence the name) however, were sold in the 1970s and 80s to the Local Planning Authority, with those on the Council's housing register being given priority.

Rationale for designation

- Area provides a tree lined length of open green space, used by local residents for recreational purposes, including a safe space for children to play away from York Road.

3. Village Greens by Wheelers Farm Gardens



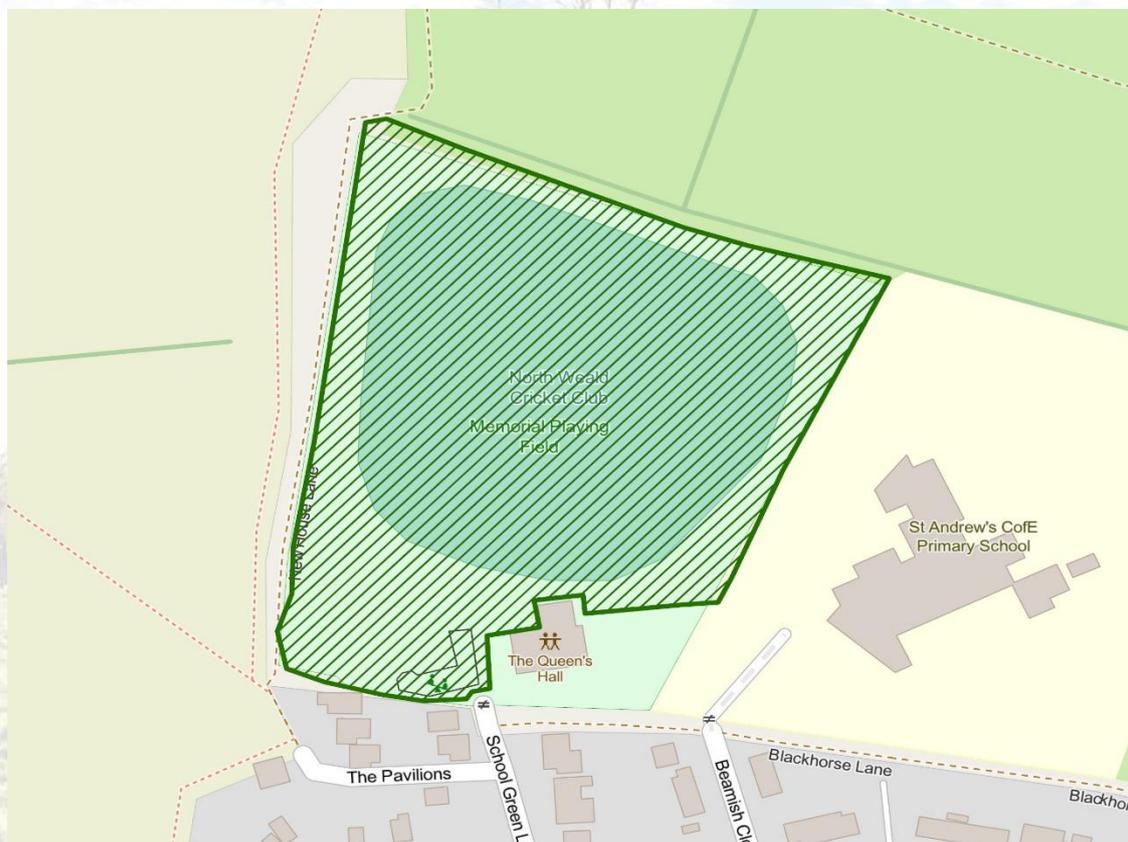
- 8.12 The village greens at Wheelers Farm Gardens total 0.14 hectares, are located in the centre of North Weald village, surrounded by residential properties and, being located on the High Road, easily accessible from all parts of the village.
- 8.13 The Wheelers Farm Gardens properties were built in the 1970s and are made up of predominately retirement housing.
- 8.14 The two small greens are well used not only by local residents of Wheelers Farm Gardens but also by passing residents on route to other destinations. One green is home to the North Weald village sign, flagstaff, Bassett Millennium Walk Board and two public benches, one donated to the parish by the Bassett Action Group, the other installed by the Parish Council during COVID to aid community wellbeing.

Rationale for designation

- Area is adjacent to Wheelers Farm Garden – an area housing mainly older residents – who use this green space as a place to sit and enjoy.
- The area acts as an appealing ‘rest stop’ for residents on route to other destinations.

- The area is known locally as the 'village green' and forms part of the identity of the village.
- Provides an alternative walking route to the pavement which runs alongside a narrow section of the B181.

4. Memorial Playing Fields



- 8.15 The Memorial Playing Field is located immediately to the north but adjacent to the main built up area of North Weald village. It totals 2.78 hectares and is easily accessible, being located next to St Andrew's Primary School and the Queens Hall Community Centre.
- 8.16 The Memorial Playing Field was originally given as a Deed of Gift to the Parish by a local farmer (part of School Green Farm) in the 1950s and was held in trust by the Parish Council (however the management of this area later moved to the Queens Hall Charity).
- 8.17 The land includes a recreation ground, used by the local cricket team amongst others, a small pocket park, youth shelter and various areas of hard surfacing.
- 8.18 Located close to St Andrew's Primary School, this open space is well used by local residents, dog walkers, and community groups for reason of recreation, exercise and organised sports.
- 8.19 The field is used to run free local community play sessions in the summer, and is accessible to the whole community.
- 8.20 In 2014, the field itself was designated as a Queen Elizabeth II Fields in Trust, so is afforded some protection.

Rationale for designation

- The only formal recreation ground in the village.

- Used by a number of local clubs, including for cricket and football.
- Well used by local residents for walks, exercise, sports and dog walking.
- Given as a deed of gift to the local community.

5. Green by Pike Way



8.21 Pike Way Green is a small area of recreational space located on the corner of Park Close and Pike Way in the south of North Weald village. It is 0.11 hectares and is adjacent to existing residential areas. It is easily accessible, being located just off the B181 Epping Road

Rationale for designation

- Provides a valued area of open space for local residents to enjoy.
- Well used by children and residents in the local community as an area of recreation.
- Creates a sense of openness and space for local residents.
- Provides a green buffer between housing and the busy B181, minimising noise and air pollution impacts from traffic.

6. Green by Park Close



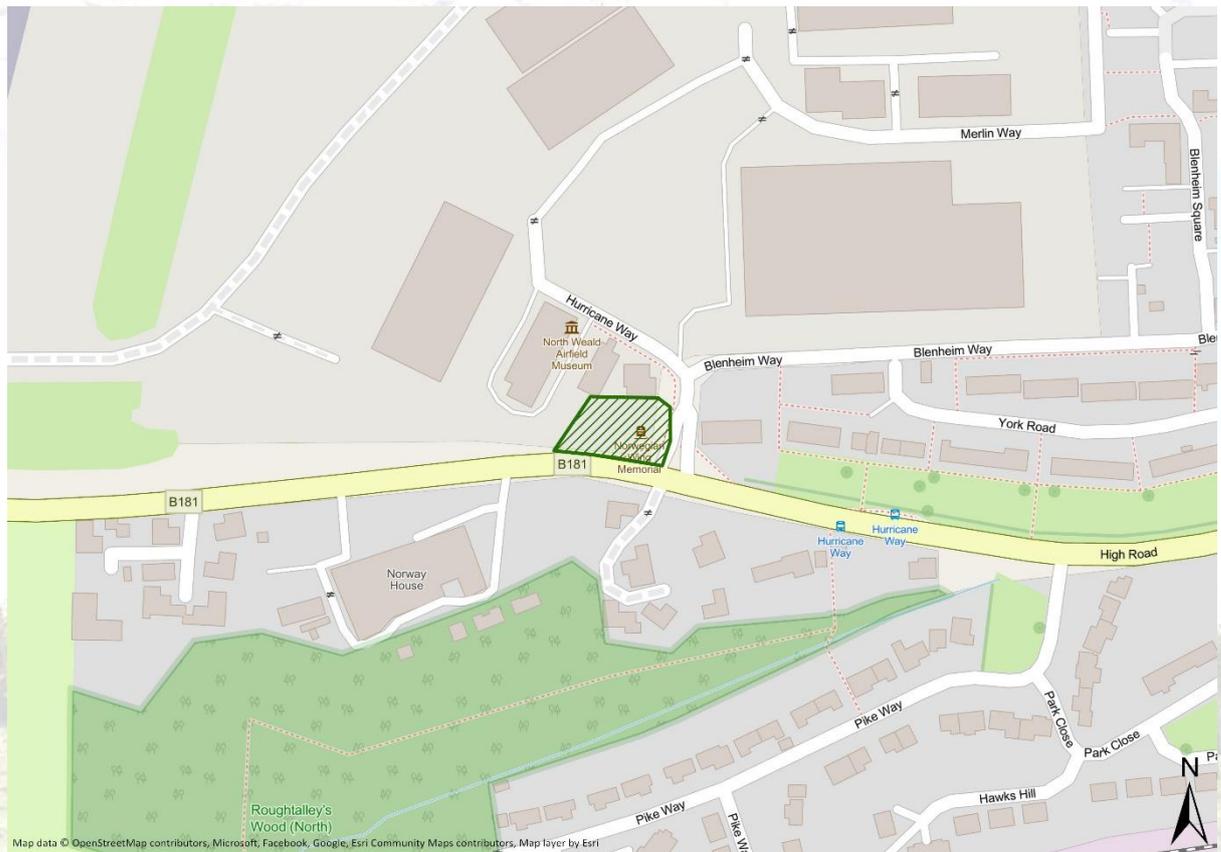
8.22 Park Close Green is a small area of recreational space located in the south of North Weald village. It totals 0.13 hectares and is well located for the surrounding residential areas. It is close to the B181 Epping Road which is the main road through the village.

8.23 The houses built in Park Close were originally for members of the Royal Air Force and were within the perimeter of the Airfield. Following the closure of the Airfield these properties became available for civilian use. The houses run in a circular fashion around this small green, used by local residents for recreation and enjoyment.

Rationale for designation

- Well used by children and residents in the local community as an area of recreation.
- Provides a sense of openness for the setting.

7. Land in front of Airfield Museum



- 8.24 Located at the entrance to Hurricane Way, which is the historic entrance to North Weald Airfield, this small area of open green space (totalling 0.14 hectares) is home to the North Weald Airfield Museum, the Debt of Honour, and the Norwegian stone. All of these are representative of the historic links the Parish has to the Airfield and are detailed earlier in this plan.
- 8.25 Whilst located in the far south-west of North Weald village, the area is easily accessible by the local community, being located on the B181 Epping Road which is, the main road through the village.
- 8.26 The site is host to a number of small benches, each of which has a significance connected to the of history of North Weald Bassett.
- 8.27 This site is used for the annual Remembrance Day services, attended by over 300 residents and members of the Norwegian Airforce every year. The site holds a strong historic significance to the evolution of North Weald village and is strongly valued by local residents.

Rationale for designation

- Provides a visual cue of the links between Norway and the Airfield, by way of the Norwegian Stone;
- Home to the Debt of Honour;
- Location of annual Remembrance Day service;
- Links with views directly opposite to Norway House;

- Historic links as it was the site of the original gateway to the Airfield;
- Seat commemorating 75 years since the arrival of 331 and 332 (Norwegian) Squadrons, and Lt General Wilhelm Mohr RAAF (1917-2016).



Figure 8.1: Local Green Spaces

 Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

 Local Green Spaces:

- 1 Weald Common
- 2 Green in front of York Road
- 3 Village Greens by Wheelers Farm Gardens
- 4 Memorial Playing Fields
- 5 Green by Pike Way
- 6 Green by Park Close
- 7 Land in front of Airfield Museum



POLICY LGS1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

A. The following space as shown on the Policies Map and in Figure 8.1 are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- 1. Weald Common (part)**
- 2. Green in front of York Road**
- 3. Village Greens by Wheelers Farm Gardens**
- 4. Memorial Playing Fields**
- 5. Green by Pike Way**
- 6. Green by Park Close**
- 7. Land in front of Airfield Museum**

B. Proposals for development on these Local Green Spaces will be managed in accordance with national policy for green belts.

Images of each Local Green Space parcel:



1. Weald Common (part)



2. Green in front of York Road



3. Village Greens by Wheelers Farm Gardens



4. Memorial Playing Fields



5. Green by Pike Way



6. Green by Park Close



7. Land in front of Airfield Museum

9 TRAFFIC AND ROADS

- 9.1 Traffic in and around North Weald Bassett was an issue raised by the community throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. In a location such as North Weald Bassett which is relatively close to large centres such as Harlow, Chelmsford and London, as well as having the M11 motorway running through the parish, an element of traffic is to be expected.
- 9.2 The proximity of Epping London Underground Station is a significant issue given the demand for rail-based commuter routes and its relative popularity given that it is cheaper than the local overground routes. It is clear that North Weald acts as a funnel for those road users from the Chelmsford and Ongar areas wishing to access the M11 and M25 motorways as well as the central line in Epping.
- 9.3 Unfortunately, the Neighbourhood Plan has limited potential to directly address the specific issues raised. The NPPF states:
- “Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios”* (paragraph 116).
- 9.4 The Epping Forest Local Plan has established the principles of how the growth proposed within the parish will address the impacts of traffic. Therefore the potential for the Neighbourhood Plan to go further is greatly limited. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan can only address locations within the parish and some of the traffic issues relate to junctions elsewhere. This is why the Plan has focused on local journeys within the parish and increasing the potential for these to be taken on foot or by bicycle.
- 9.5 However, it should be recognised that due to the rural nature of some parts of the Plan area, the lack of both available and reliable public transport means that car journeys are often essential. The Epping Forest Local Plan allocates a number of large scale development sites in the Parish, each individual site having an impact on traffic. Individual developers will need to take account of the other developments sites in the Plan area, and the cumulative impact this will have not only on our rural roads, but on essential vehicular journey connection points. This should be recognised in any future development proposals.
- 9.6 The Epping Forest Local Plan places great emphasis on ensuring that sustainable transport is provided as part of any new development. However, through the development of the Neighbourhood Plan the local community has expressed concern that these policies do not go far enough to ensure that the ‘modal shift’ (away from cars to public transport, walking and cycling) will actually take place.
- 9.7 It is important that this Neighbourhood Plan recognises these issues raised by the community relating to traffic flow. These issues should be addressed through investment in improved infrastructure and, more directly, it should be ensured that planning applications on the site allocations, or any other relevant planning application, properly and fully demonstrate that such matters will be dealt with appropriately.

The Plain Junction / Epping Underground Station

- 9.8 Through the development of the Epping Forest Local Plan, it was established that The Plain Junction (of the B181 The Plain and the B1393 Thornwood Road) is at capacity with no obvious solution to address this. Travel to Epping from North Weald is therefore problematic by car which is particularly important given the number of commuters from North Weald looking to

access Epping London Underground Station to commute into London. This will be exacerbated by the new development in North Weald. Solutions such as a Park and Ride have been identified but this should be part of a wider package of measures to address this.

Thornwood

- 9.9 Traffic travelling through Thornwood was identified as a major issue by local residents of the area. Its proximity to junction 7 of the M11 and the associated route to Epping (also to and from Harlow) makes it a popular route, with rat running along Rye Hill Road and Woodside. With the development at Latton Priory proposing a potential access onto Rye Hill Road, there are significant concerns that such rat running will increase substantially. In addition, employment growth at North Weald Airfield is likely to increase HGV traffic. This traffic is totally unsuited to using the small local roads. Development proposals must consider this fully and demonstrate that all reasonable measures are taken to minimise this.
- 9.10 It is vital that new development sites which require a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement (due to the potential significance of their impacts) adequately plan for the impact on local roads and traffic of this development. Development proposals of such sites will be expected to provide evidence setting out the impact of the development on local roads, and what mitigation measures will be taken to avoid any negative impact.

POLICY TAR1: TRAFFIC AND ROADS

- A. Development proposals are required to adequately consider the impact of their proposals on the local road network and provide appropriate mitigation as necessary. All Transport Assessments (for larger sites) or Transport Statements (for smaller sites) - as required by paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework - must address the direct and where relevant the cumulative transport impact, in particular on the following junctions and routes, identified on the Policies Map:**
- a. The Plain Junction (of the B181 The Plain and the B1393 Thornwood Road)**
 - b. Rye Hill Road.**
 - c. A414**
 - d. Junction 7 roundabout of the M11**
- B. Development proposals that are likely to create significant additional Heavy Goods Vehicles must demonstrate, through the submission of a travel plan, how these vehicles will be expected to travel to and from the proposal site. Proposals must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority that these routes are suitable for such vehicles based on the weight restriction and width of the roads on the route.**

10 NON-POLICY ACTIONS

- 10.1 Table 10.1 identifies a series of actions under each theme which are important non-policy actions arising from the development of the Plan. What this means is that it is not appropriate to address these matters directly through planning policy, but they are important issues which should be addressed in order to achieve the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.

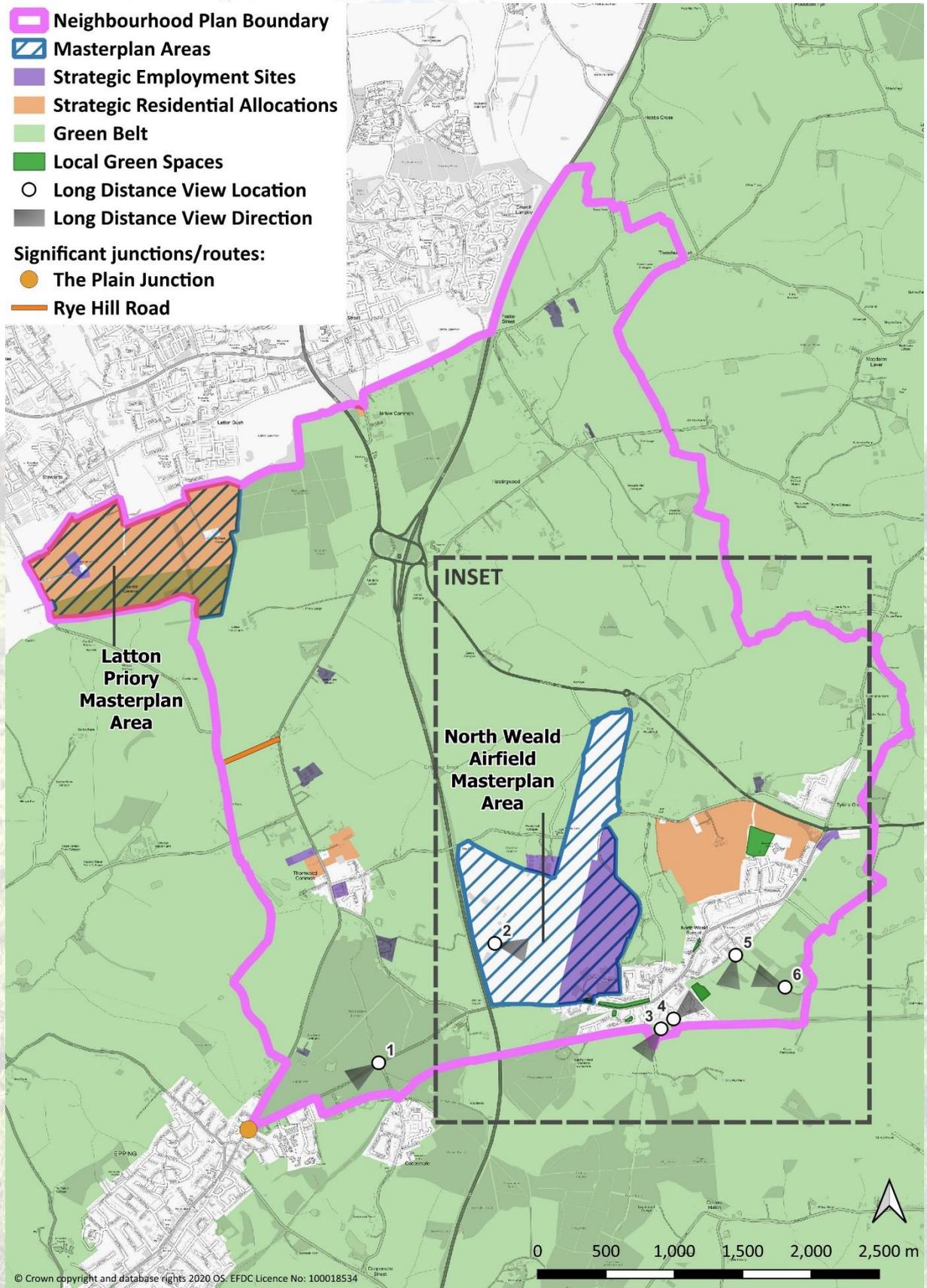
Table 10.1: Non-land use issues to be addressed

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partner
Roads, Transport and Travel		
Public transport (by way of buses only) is infrequent and unreliable and is not considered by many in the Parish as a reasonable alternative to private car use. In order to effect a change in how people travel, a more reliable, attractive and frequent bus service should run between North Weald village and Epping, and Thornwood Common and Epping. There is also no public bus service through the main Hastingwood settlement.	New development in North Weald village, Thornwood village and Latton Priory will exacerbate the traffic issues at the Plain junction without a reasonable alternative sustainable transport offer being in place. The Parish Council will liaise with the Masterplanners of the large development sites in North Weald village, Thornwood, and Latton Priory to ensure this issue is considered as part of the overall development, and that plans are in place to address this.	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Epping Forest District Council. Masterplanners/ Developers. Essex County Council.
Church Lane, North Weald – a rural road, single track in some places, and a well-known rat run, unsuitable for a large volume of vehicles.	New development in North Weald village will likely exacerbate the use of Church Lane. Traffic should be discouraged from this route. The Parish Council will liaise with the Masterplanners of the two large development sites in North Weald Village to ensure this issue is considered as part of the overall development plans. Options include the linking of Merlin Way with the B181 to provide a suitable alternative to Church Lane, and restrictions along Church Lane	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Epping Forest District Council. Masterplanners. Essex County Council.
Rye Hill Road, Thornwood – a rural road, extremely narrow in some places, and a well-known rat run between Harlow and Epping when the Hastingwood Roundabout is congested.	New development at Latton Priory will undoubtedly have an effect on the use of Rye Hill Road. Traffic should be discouraged from this route. The Parish Council will liaise with the Masterplanners of this site to ensure this issue is considered as part of the overall development plan.	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Epping Forest District Council. Masterplanners. Essex County Council.
Lack of roadside pavements in Hastingwood, specifically along Hastingwood Road, Mill Street, Foster Street and Harlow	The Parish Council will continue to liaise with landowners and the Highway Authority to try and secure funding and agreement to create safe, accessible	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Landowners. Essex County Council.

Issue	Possible actions	Lead agencies and partner
Common, resulting in dangerous and unsuitable walking conditions for local residents	footpaths for public use, to increase connectivity in Hastingwood.	
There are no dedicated cycle links between or within any of the three villages in the Parish, nor connecting to neighbouring villages and towns, thus restricting sustainable connectivity to within each settlement	The Parish Council will push for improved cycle connectivity both within and outside the Parish.	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Landowners. Essex County Council. Epping Forest District Council.
The B1393 through Thornwood Common, between the Hastingwood roundabout and the Plain Junction (a distance of roughly 2.7 miles) has no less than 5 changes in speed limit, causing confusion to road users and contributing to speeding issues along this route.	The Parish Council will continue to liaise with the Highway Authority to address this issue	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Essex County Council. Epping Forest District Council.
Public realm		
Lack of publicly accessible sporting facilities in North Weald, with residents having to travel to neighbouring towns to use facilities. By the end of the plan period, homes in North Weald village are expected to have increased by 42%, resulting in a population of approximately 8,500 residents	The Parish Council will liaise with all new developers to secure additional sporting and leisure facilities wherever possible, to support a physically and mentally strong community and reduce car journeys to areas outside of the parish.	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Epping Forest District Council. Developers.
Small shopping parade on North Weald High Road suffers from parking and congestion issues and is at risk of decline following the creation of a new shopping centre in the North Weald development.	The Parish Council will support and encourage where possible the improvements of shops and small businesses on North Weald High Road, looking to provide an improved parking solution to the area and ensure these facilities remain attractive to use and are accessible.	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Shop owners and tenants. Landowners. Essex County Council.
The Parish has a good network of Public Rights of Way, however improvements are needed to a number of these routes to ensure they are accessible and can link each of the three villages safely.	The Parish Council will continue to liaise with landowners and Essex County Council to press for improvements and enhancements to current public rights of way	North Weald Bassett Parish Council. Landowners. Essex County Council.

11 POLICIES MAPS

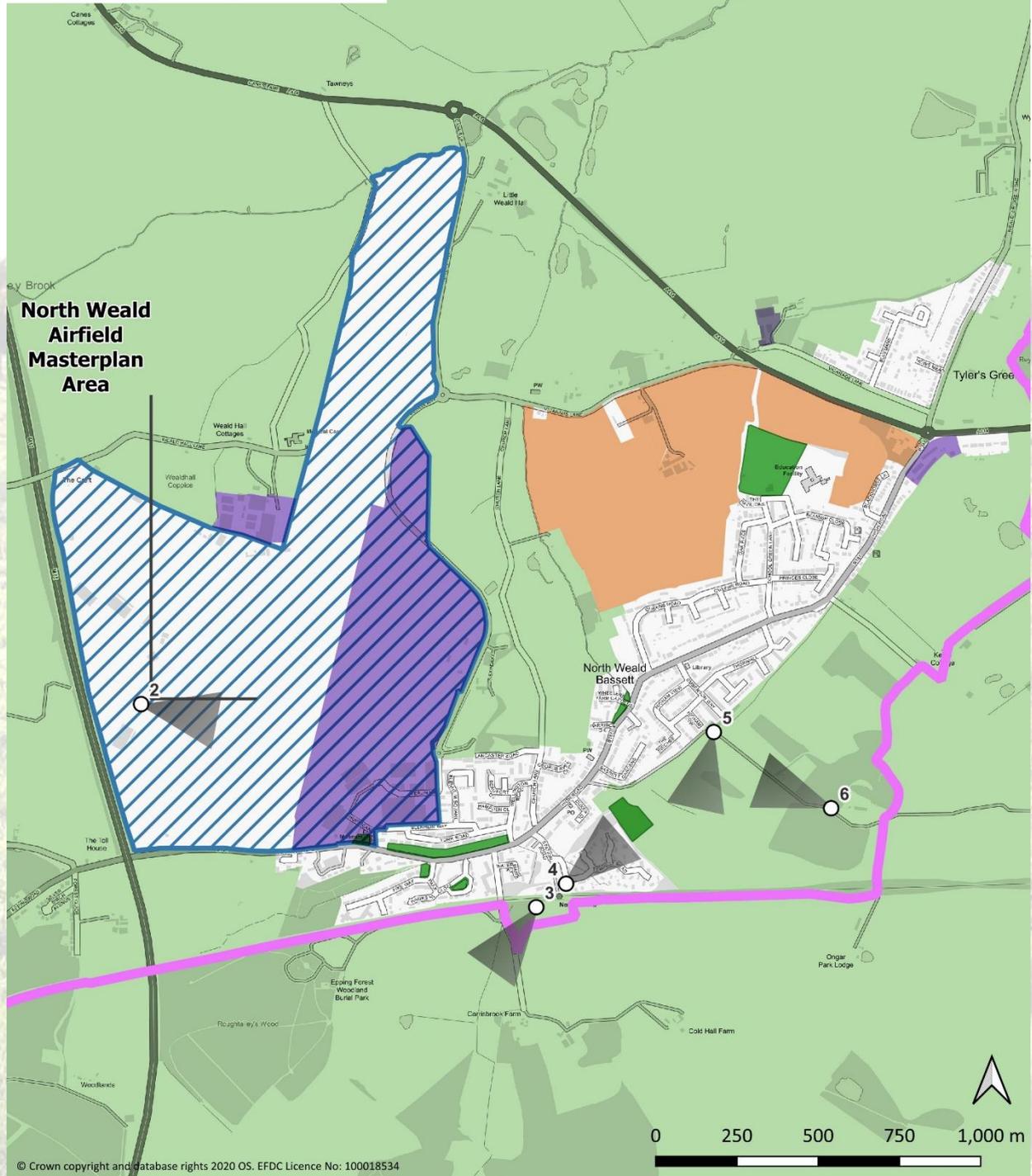
-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
 -  Masterplan Areas
 -  Strategic Employment Sites
 -  Strategic Residential Allocations
 -  Green Belt
 -  Local Green Spaces
 -  Long Distance View Location
 -  Long Distance View Direction
- Significant junctions/routes:**
-  The Plain Junction
 -  Rye Hill Road



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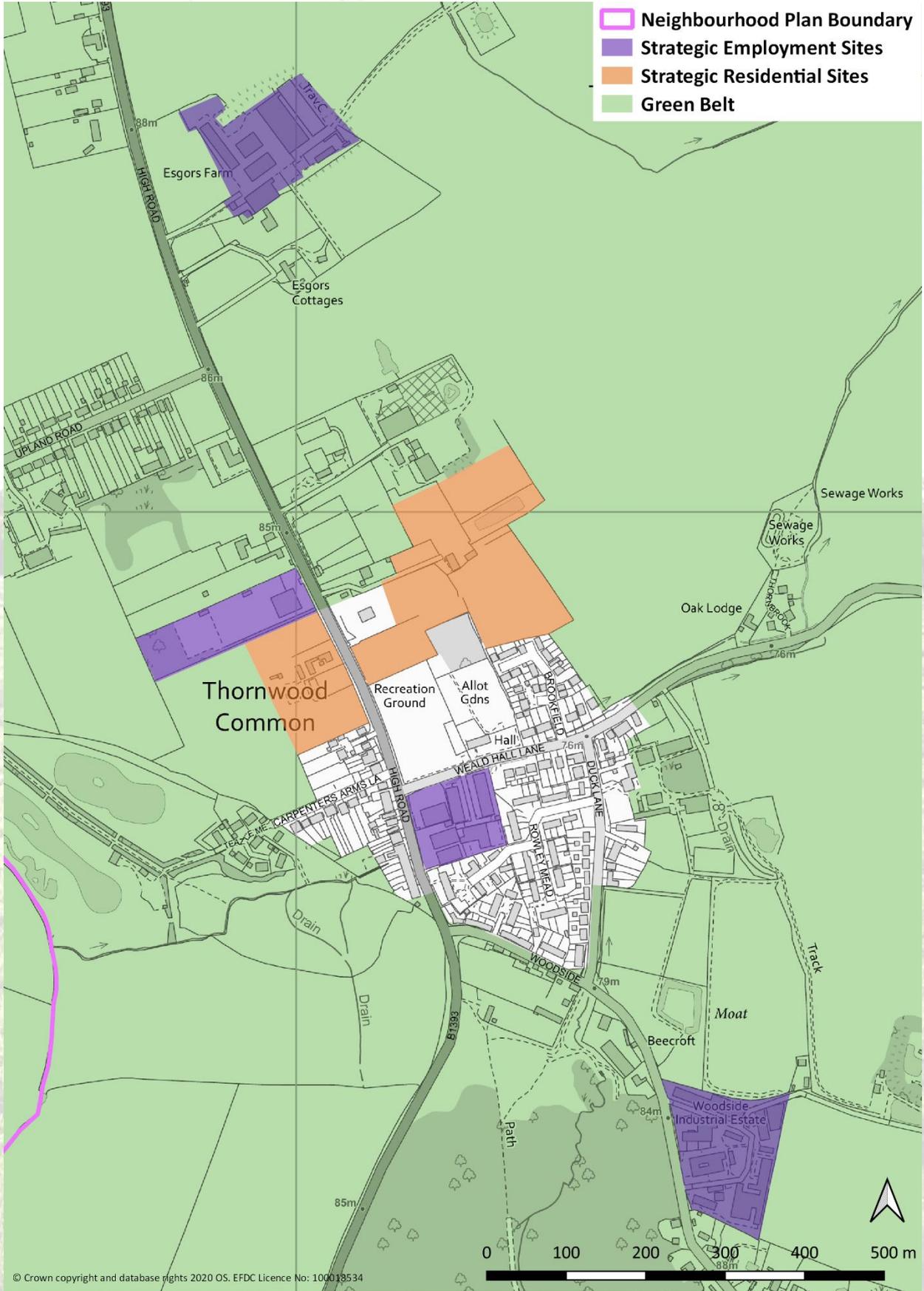
INSET MAP - NORTH WEALD

-  Neighbourhood Plan Boundary
-  Masterplan Areas
-  Strategic Employment Sites
-  Strategic Residential Allocations
-  Long Distance View Location
-  Long Distance View Direction
-  Green Belt
-  Local Green Spaces



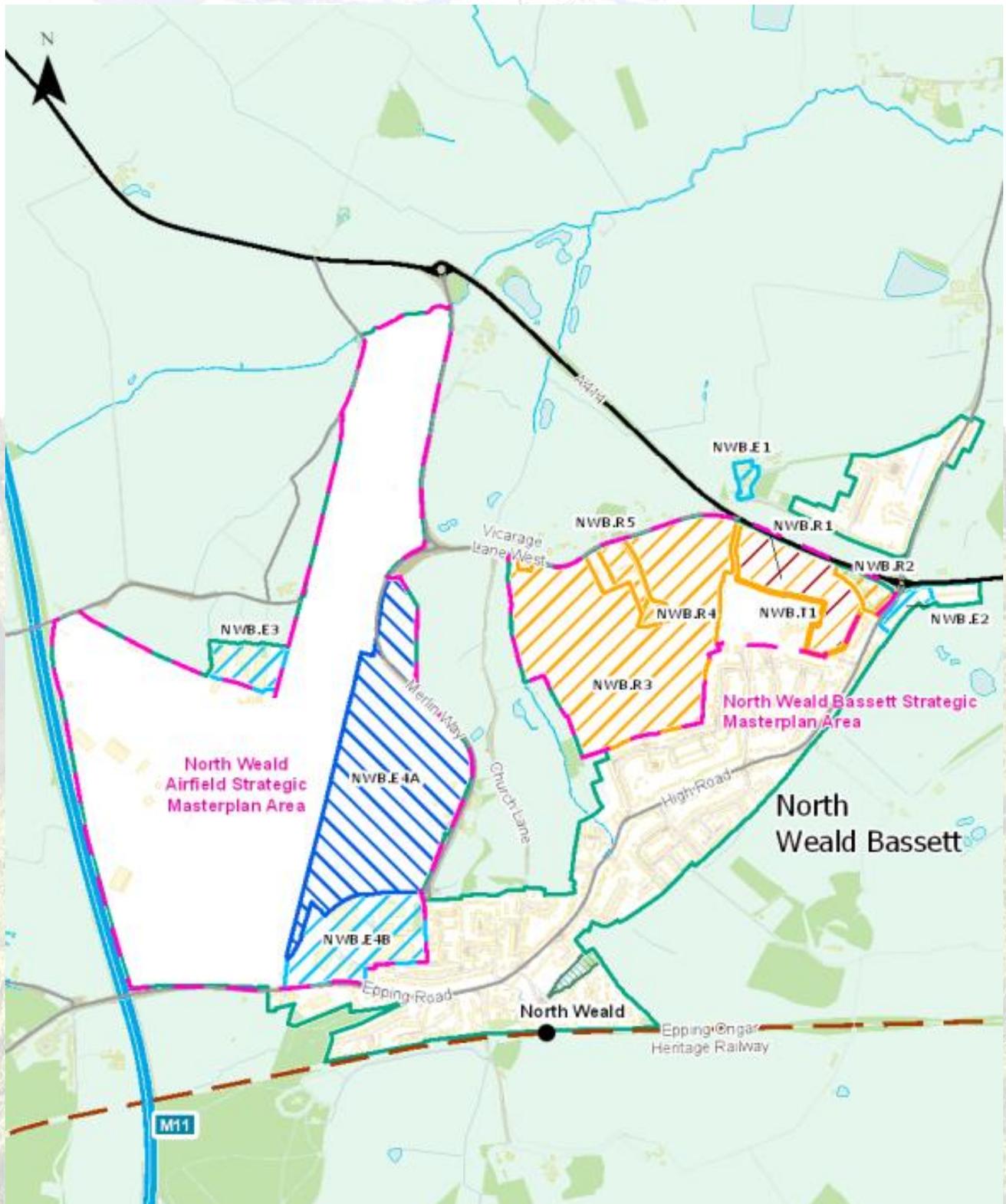
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THORNWOOD



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Appendix A: Epping Forest Local Plan allocations



EPHING FOREST LOCAL PLAN POLICY P6: NORTH WEALD BASSETT

Residential sites:

NWB.R1: Land West of Tyler's Green

NWB.R2: Land at Tylers Farm

NWB.R3: Land south of Vicarage Lane

NWB.R4: Land at Chase Farm

NWB.R5: Land at The Acorns, Chase Farm

These sites are required to deliver a minimum of 1,050 homes

Employment sites:

NWB.E1: New House Farm, Vicarage Lane

NWB.E2: Tylers Green Industrial Estate

NWB.E3: Weald Hall Farm and Commercial Centre

NWB.E4A: North Weald Airfield (only for Use Classes B2 and B8 and offices, research and development and light industrial within Use Class E)

NWB.E4B: Bassett Business Park and Merlin Way Industrial Estate

Traveller sites:

NWB.T1: Land west of Tylers Green -5 pitches

Infrastructure provision:

Appropriate education provision including early years, primary school and secondary school places

Appropriate provision of health facilities

Provision of walking and cycling facilities, providing linkages both within the site and to key destinations

Enhancements to public transport provision or other initiatives which reduce the need to travel by car

Highways and junction upgrades

Local upgrades to existing waste water network and drainage infrastructure

Potential upgrades to existing water, gas and telecommunications infrastructure

Improvement and provision of green and blue infrastructure and open space throughout the settlement

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TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES/ENGAGEMENTS: Cllr Janet Whitehouse
11th February 2026 – 10th March 2026

14 th February 2026	Wildlife photo exhibition at museum in Waltham Abbey
15 th February 2026	Launch of Radio Forest's digital service
16 th February 2026	Meeting with French journalist about the Epping protests
18 th February 2026	Larger Local Councils meeting
25 th February 2026	Dementia Awareness session
26 th February 2026	Public meeting by Princess Alexandra Hospital
1 st March 2026	ECC Chairman's Civic Service at Chelmsford Cathedral
2 nd March 2026	Cemetery meeting
2 nd March 2026	Town Clerk's Appraisal
7 th March 2026	Epping Rotary Club's Literary Trail - present prizes
7 th March 2026	Uniquely Me - present awards
9 th March 2026	Safer Epping
10 th March 2026	Dementia Fair

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES/ENGAGEMENTS: Cllr R Sharif
11th February 2026 – 10th March 2026

13 th February 2026	Woodland Grove Music Therapy Sessions
7 th March 2026	Rotary Club of Epping Book Trail and short story competition.

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**1 EPPING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Epping's Neighbourhood Plan, led by Epping Town Council, will hopefully be going to a referendum on 18th June 2026. The Neighbourhood Plan is currently being redrafted with the Inspector's comments in preparation for the referendum and we hope to publicise this at the Annual Town Meeting on 17th March 2026 and with further public consultations prior to the referendum date.

2 STONARDS HILL RECREATION GROUND PATH WIDENING

The works at Stonards Hill recreation ground involving the new widened path should be completed over the next month or two now hopefully there will be some drier weather. The path is complete, there are just some filling, topsoiling, levelling and seeding tasks to be undertaken to the surrounding areas. The extremely wet weather over the winter months has made this conclusion slower and more difficult.

3 BLUE PLAQUE: ERNEST WYTHES

The blue plaque for Ernest Wythes is now in situ on the Hemnall Social Club. An unveiling ceremony will be held towards the end of March 2026. Thank you to Cllr J Duffell for arranging its install.

4 EPPING HIGH STREET: STREET FOOD MARKET 13TH MARCH 2026

The first Epping Town Council driven street food market, Epping Eats, will be held in Epping High Street on the piazza area and up to Marks & Spencer on Friday 13th March 2026 from 3pm to 9pm. This will be delivered and managed by an external partner and it will be monitored for success with a view to being a monthly event.

Epping Town Council 2025/2026

04/03/2026

14:26

Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 04/03/2026

Month No: 11

Committee Report to 28th February 2026

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>Full Council</u>						
Income	862,742	845,731	(17,011)			102.0%
Expenditure	816,537	775,015	(41,522)	0	(41,522)	105.4%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>46,204</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>24,512</u>			
plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0			
less Transfer to EMR	0	0	0			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>46,204</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>24,512</u>			
<u>Earmarked Reserves</u>						
Income	0	0	0			0.0%
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>			
<hr/>						
Grand Totals:- Income	862,742	845,731	(17,011)			102.0%
Expenditure	816,537	775,015	(41,522)	0	(41,522)	105.4%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>46,204</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>24,512</u>			
plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0			
less Transfer to EMR	0	0	0			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>46,204</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>24,512</u>			

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>100 Service & Committee Support</u>							
1076 Precept	645,791	645,791	0			100.0%	
1090 Interest Received	2,249	1,800	(449)			124.9%	
1900 Other Receipts	0	500	500			0.0%	
4000 Salaries	(197,799)	(215,000)	17,201		17,201	92.0%	
4010 Insurance	(10,600)	(10,600)	0		0	100.0%	
4020 Equipment	(3,555)	(1,000)	(2,555)		(2,555)	355.5%	
4025 Consumables	(585)	(700)	115		115	83.6%	
4030 Postage	(729)	(800)	71		71	91.1%	
4035 Printing & Photocopying	(1,677)	(1,800)	123		123	93.1%	
4040 Professional Fees	(15,193)	(10,000)	(5,193)		(5,193)	151.9%	
4045 Subscriptions & Licences	(12,060)	(13,000)	940		940	92.8%	
4050 Telephone & IT Services	(14,540)	(9,000)	(5,540)		(5,540)	161.6%	
4060 Training - Staff	(5,295)	(2,000)	(3,295)		(3,295)	264.8%	
4065 Training - Members	(150)	(600)	450		450	25.0%	
4070 Travel & Subsistence - Staff	(458)	(500)	42		42	91.5%	
4075 Travel & Subsistence - Members	(19)	(600)	581		581	3.2%	
4080 Mayor's Allowance	(119)	(1,000)	881		881	11.9%	
4090 Bank Charges	(94)	(110)	17		17	85.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	(1,489)	(1,000)	(489)		(489)	148.9%	
4100 Bad Debt & Write Offs	(466)	(100)	(366)		(366)	466.2%	
<u>110 Neighbourhood Planning</u>							
4370 N Planning Guidance	833	(1,000)	1,833		1,833	(83.3%)	
<u>120 Grants</u>							
4140 Grants - S137	(150)	0	(150)		(150)	0.0%	
4145 Grants - Other Powers	(275)	(2,000)	1,725		1,725	13.8%	
<u>140 Events & Publications</u>							
1200 Town Show Income	6,023	4,500	(1,523)			133.8%	
1210 Christmas Market Income	5,150	4,500	(650)			114.4%	
1230 Christmas Tree Donations	500	0	(500)			0.0%	
4165 Epping in Bloom	(1,000)	(1,000)	0		0	100.0%	
4170 Town Show Expenditure	(4,291)	(4,000)	(291)		(291)	107.3%	
4175 Christmas Market Expenditure	(5,161)	(4,500)	(661)		(661)	114.7%	
4180 Christmas Lights Expenditure	(33,519)	(15,000)	(18,519)		(18,519)	223.5%	
4185 Christmas Tree Expenditure	(2,073)	(3,000)	927		927	69.1%	
4195 Mayor's Civic Reception	(1,418)	(2,000)	582		582	70.9%	
4205 Talk About Epping	(1,231)	(1,000)	(231)		(231)	123.1%	
4215 Distribution Costs	(218)	0	(218)		(218)	0.0%	
4220 Other Council Events	(1,692)	(2,500)	808		808	67.7%	

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 04/03/2026

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report to 28th February 2026

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4225 Other Council Publications	(990)	(1,320)	330		330	75.0%	
<u>160 Epping Hall</u>							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	42,053	48,000	5,947			87.6%	
4010 Insurance	(8,942)	(8,000)	(942)		(942)	111.8%	
4020 Equipment	(584)	(1,500)	916		916	38.9%	
4025 Consumables	(1,438)	(1,500)	62		62	95.8%	
4085 PWLB Loan Repayments	(16,164)	(16,164)	(0)		(0)	100.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	(57,714)	0	(57,714)		(57,714)	0.0%	
4250 Business Rates	(10,978)	(12,000)	1,022		1,022	91.5%	
4255 Utilities	(11,727)	(15,000)	3,273		3,273	78.2%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(12,470)	(15,000)	2,530		2,530	83.1%	
<u>180 Jack Silley Pavilion</u>							
1055 Utility Recharges	999	0	(999)			0.0%	
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	28,083	31,000	2,917			90.6%	
4010 Insurance	(1,720)	(1,720)	0		0	100.0%	
4020 Equipment	(144)	(800)	656		656	18.0%	
4025 Consumables	(670)	(500)	(170)		(170)	133.9%	
4250 Business Rates	(4,840)	(4,800)	(40)		(40)	100.8%	
4255 Utilities	(12,620)	(12,500)	(120)		(120)	101.0%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(2,593)	(6,000)	3,407		3,407	43.2%	
<u>200 Epping Market</u>							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	25,201	33,500	8,299			75.2%	
1310 Market casuals	12,579	10,500	(2,079)			119.8%	
4007 Advertising & promotion	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
4010 Insurance	(760)	(760)	0		0	100.0%	
4020 Equipment	(1,553)	(1,000)	(553)		(553)	155.3%	
4085 PWLB Loan Repayments	(6,159)	(6,160)	1		1	100.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	(2,638)	0	(2,638)		(2,638)	0.0%	
4250 Business Rates	(4,990)	(5,500)	510		510	90.7%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(1,556)	(1,000)	(556)		(556)	155.6%	
4300 Market Contractor	(19,580)	(24,500)	4,920		4,920	79.9%	
<u>220 Epping Cemetery</u>							
1500 Burials & Memorials	34,750	30,000	(4,750)			115.8%	
4010 Insurance	(960)	(960)	0		0	100.0%	
4020 Equipment	(440)	(500)	60		60	87.9%	
4025 Consumables	(113)	0	(113)		(113)	0.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	(1,309)	(500)	(809)		(809)	261.8%	
4250 Business Rates	(2,445)	(2,000)	(445)		(445)	122.3%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(12,582)	(3,000)	(9,582)		(9,582)	419.4%	

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 04/03/2026

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report to 28th February 2026

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>240 Parks & Building Maintenance</u>							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	6,918	6,000	(918)			115.3%	
1320 Tennis Court income	2,120	1,800	(320)			117.8%	
1600 Town Greens	1,567	2,400	833			65.3%	
1900 Other Receipts	18,600	0	(18,600)			0.0%	
4000 Salaries	(214,935)	(245,000)	30,065		30,065	87.7%	
4010 Insurance	(3,550)	(3,550)	0		0	100.0%	
4020 Equipment	(9,719)	(8,000)	(1,719)		(1,719)	121.5%	
4025 Consumables	(842)	(1,000)	158		158	84.2%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	(2,983)	0	(2,983)		(2,983)	0.0%	
4255 Utilities	(3,515)	(6,000)	2,485		2,485	58.6%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(33,455)	(25,000)	(8,455)		(8,455)	133.8%	
4265 Public Toilet Cleaning	(1,895)	(1,300)	(595)		(595)	145.8%	
4270 Tree management	(2,775)	(3,000)	225		225	92.5%	
4275 Tennis Courts	(981)	(1,000)	19		19	98.1%	
4310 Vehicles	(1,645)	(2,000)	355		355	82.3%	
4360 Fuel	(2,783)	(4,500)	1,717		1,717	61.8%	
<u>260 Public Convenience</u>							
1055 Utility Recharges	17,487	10,000	(7,487)			174.9%	
4020 Equipment	(16)	(100)	84		84	16.3%	
4025 Consumables	(120)	(1,000)	880		880	12.0%	
4255 Utilities	(16,865)	(10,000)	(6,865)		(6,865)	168.7%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(847)	(2,000)	1,153		1,153	42.4%	
4265 Public Toilet Cleaning	(4,010)	(6,000)	1,990		1,990	66.8%	
<u>280 Allotments</u>							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	4,378	4,440	62			98.6%	
4010 Insurance	(320)	(320)	0		0	100.0%	
4020 Equipment	0	(300)	300		300	0.0%	
4025 Consumables	0	(300)	300		300	0.0%	
4255 Utilities	(533)	(400)	(133)		(133)	133.3%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	0	(500)	500		500	0.0%	
<u>300 Street Furniture</u>							
4020 Equipment	0	(2,000)	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	0	(1,000)	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(776)	(2,000)	1,224		1,224	38.8%	
<u>320 War Memorial</u>							
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	0	(100)	100		100	0.0%	

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 04/03/2026

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report to 28th February 2026

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>340 Council as Landlord</u>							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	4,992	6,000	1,008			83.2%	
1900 Other Receipts	3,300	5,000	1,700			66.0%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	(270)	(1,500)	1,230		1,230	18.0%	
<u>360 Council as Tenant</u>							
4400 Letting Rents & Licence Costs	0	(151)	151		151	0.0%	
Grand Totals:- Income	862,742	845,731	(17,011)			102.0%	
Expenditure	816,537	775,015	(41,522)	0	(41,522)	105.4%	
Net Income over Expenditure	46,204	70,716	24,512				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	46,204	70,716	24,512				

Date: 04/03/2026

Epping Town Council 2025/2026

Page 1

Time: 14:21

Co-operative Bank current

List of Payments made between 01/02/2026 and 28/02/2026

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
04/02/2026	Co-operative Online Account	Transfer	500.00		Transfer 
09/02/2026	Yu Energy Retail Limited	DD01	183.42		Electric Jan 26
09/02/2026	Yu Energy Retail Limited	DD02	990.56		Purchase Ledger Payment
10/02/2026	D S Safety	BAC1002/01	140.90		Work boots/shoes
10/02/2026	Mailcoms Ltd	BAC1002/02	192.60		De-licence franking mach
10/02/2026	RAD Group	BAC1002/03	1,768.80		Parallels on mac
10/02/2026	Nest Pension	BAC1002/04	465.04		Pension conts Jan 26
10/02/2026	HMRC	BAC1002/05	9,298.27		NI+PAYE conts Jan 26
10/02/2026	Essex Pension Fund	BAC1002/06	3,745.38		Pension conts
10/02/2026	Baron Security Services Ltd	BAC1002/07	45.00		Replace battery on mains panel
13/02/2026	Salary transfers	BACS	24,556.48		Salary payments
16/02/2026	Peninsula	DD03	519.37		Purchase Ledger Payment
16/02/2026	D W Erections	DD04	1,958.00		Market erect supervision Feb
18/02/2026	Yu Energy Retail Limited	dd05	1,533.72		Electric Jan 26
19/02/2026	Yu Energy Retail Limited	dd06	0.55		Purchase Ledger Payment
20/02/2026	Valda Energy	dd07	516.17		Gas 1.2-1.3.26
20/02/2026	Everflow	dd08	370.14		Water 10.3-9.4.26
23/02/2026	EE	DD10	67.25		Mobile/dongle Feb 26
23/02/2026	Barclays No 1 Account	DD10	67.25		EE Limited
24/02/2026	Dunmow Training Ltd t/a Council	BAC2402/01	336.00		AI for Town Councils - BR
24/02/2026	D Haley Electrical Services Lt	BAC2402/02	942.00		10 LED replacement lights
24/02/2026	HMS Heating	BAC2402/03	317.89		Boiler works
24/02/2026	Kent County Council	BAC2402/04	141.89		Printer copy charge Nov-Jan
24/02/2026	Mobile Account Solutions (Hold	BAC2402/05	456.55		Phones
24/02/2026	MSPC Ltd	BAC2402/06	310.00		Supply+print Spring TAE
24/02/2026	NPower Commercial Gas	BAC2402/07	22.78		Floodlights Jan 26
24/02/2026	RAD Group	BAC2402/08	586.56		IT support Feb 26
24/02/2026	Spaldings Limited	BAC2402/09	300.00		Wellington boots
24/02/2026	Mr D R Whitbread	BAC2402/10	90.00		Clean EH windows+bus stops
24/02/2026	Nest Pension	BAC2402/11	465.04		Pension conts Feb 25
24/02/2026	HMRC	BAC2402/12	9,355.89		NI+PAYE Feb 26
24/02/2026	Essex Pension Fund	BAC2402/13	3,693.92		Pension conts Feb 26
25/02/2026	PHS Group	dd09	448.27		JSP toilet hyg Mar-May 26
Total Payments			64,385.69		

Barclays No 1 Account

List of Payments made between 01/02/2026 and 28/02/2026

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
04/02/2026	Barclays Bank plc	DEBIT	8.50		Commission Dec/jan
11/02/2026	Barclays Business Saver	Transfer	40,000.00		Transfer (1)
11/02/2026	Co-operative Bank current	Transfer	50,000.00		Transfer (*)
23/02/2026	Co-operative Bank current	DD10X	67.25		EE Limited cancelled (*)
23/02/2026	EE	DD10.	67.25		Purchase Ledger Payment (*)
Total Payments			<u>90,143.00</u>		

Co-operative Online Account

List of Payments made between 01/02/2026 and 28/02/2026

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
02/02/2026	Amazon UK	85	18.95		Coffee sachets
09/02/2026	Zoom Communications	86	16.79		Subscription Feb 26
16/02/2026	Amazon Uk	87	21.24		Dishwasher detergent
17/02/2026	Tesco.com	88	67.05		Wine cupboard
23/02/2026	HP Instant Ink	89	6.49		Ink subscription
Total Payments			<u>130.52</u>		

ATTACHMENT K

Corporate Governance recommendations

ATTACHMENT B

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE: March 2026

Revised programme of policy/document reviews

• Please see procedure below

POLICY	FREQUENCY OF REVIEW	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW (unless legislation requires sooner)	MEETING FOR REVIEW
3 Year Action Plan	1 year	April 2025/May 2025	ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING
Asset Register	1 year	February 2026/March 2026	COUNCIL MEETING (MARCH)
Balance of Trade Policy (Market)	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2026 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Biodiversity Statement	4 years (coincide with elections) *Would be	January 2024 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Climate and Environmental Awareness Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2026 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Code of Conduct	1 year	May 2025	ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING
Community Engagement Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2025 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Complaints Procedure	1 year *Would be every 4	February 2025 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Compliance Failure Policy *Do with Data Protection Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2025 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Crime and Disorder Policy	4 years (coincide with elections) *Would be	January 2024 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Data Protection Policy *Do with Compliance Failure Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2025 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Data Retention Policy (new)	1 year	March 2026 October 2027	COUNCIL MEETING (MARCH)
Equality Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2024 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Financial Regulations	1 year	February 2025/March 2026	COUNCIL MEETING (MARCH)
Freedom of Information Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	May 2025 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Grant Awarding Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2026 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Health and Safety Policy	1 year	February 2026/March 2026	COUNCIL MEETING (MARCH)
Inventories	1 year	January 2025	To inform Asset Register
Investment Strategy	2 years *Would be every 4	October 2026 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
IT Policy (new for AGAR)	1 year (TBC)	February 2026	COUNCIL MEETING (MARCH)

Market Policy	4 years, or part thereof (coincide with elections)	October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Media Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2025 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Optimum Resources statement	4 years (coincide with elections)	January 2024 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Procurement Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2026 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Publication Scheme	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2025 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Recruitment Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2026 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Resource Management statement	4 years (coincide with elections)	January 2024 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Risk Register	1 year	February 2026/March 2026	COUNCIL MEETING (MARCH)
Safeguarding Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	October 2026 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Social Media Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2025 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Stall Allocation Policy (Christmas/seasonal markets)	2 years (new)	October 2025	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Standing Orders	1 year	February 2026/March 2026	COUNCIL MEETING (MARCH)
Training and Development Statement	2 years *Would be every 4	February 2026 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Tree Management Policy	2 years *Would be every 4	October 2026 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Volunteering Policy	2 years *Would be	October 2026 October 2027	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST OCT AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Whistleblowing Policy	2 years *Would be	January 2026 February 2028	CORPORATE GOV (1 ST FEB AFTER NEW COUNCIL)
Policy and Governance Document Review (this document)	1 year	May 2025	ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some every 4 years (October Corporate Governance & February Corporate Governance in Civic Year 1). Split over the 2 dates to distribute the workload • Some highlighted as needs reviewing yearly as currently • Date amended to ensure reviewed in Year 1 of new Council 			

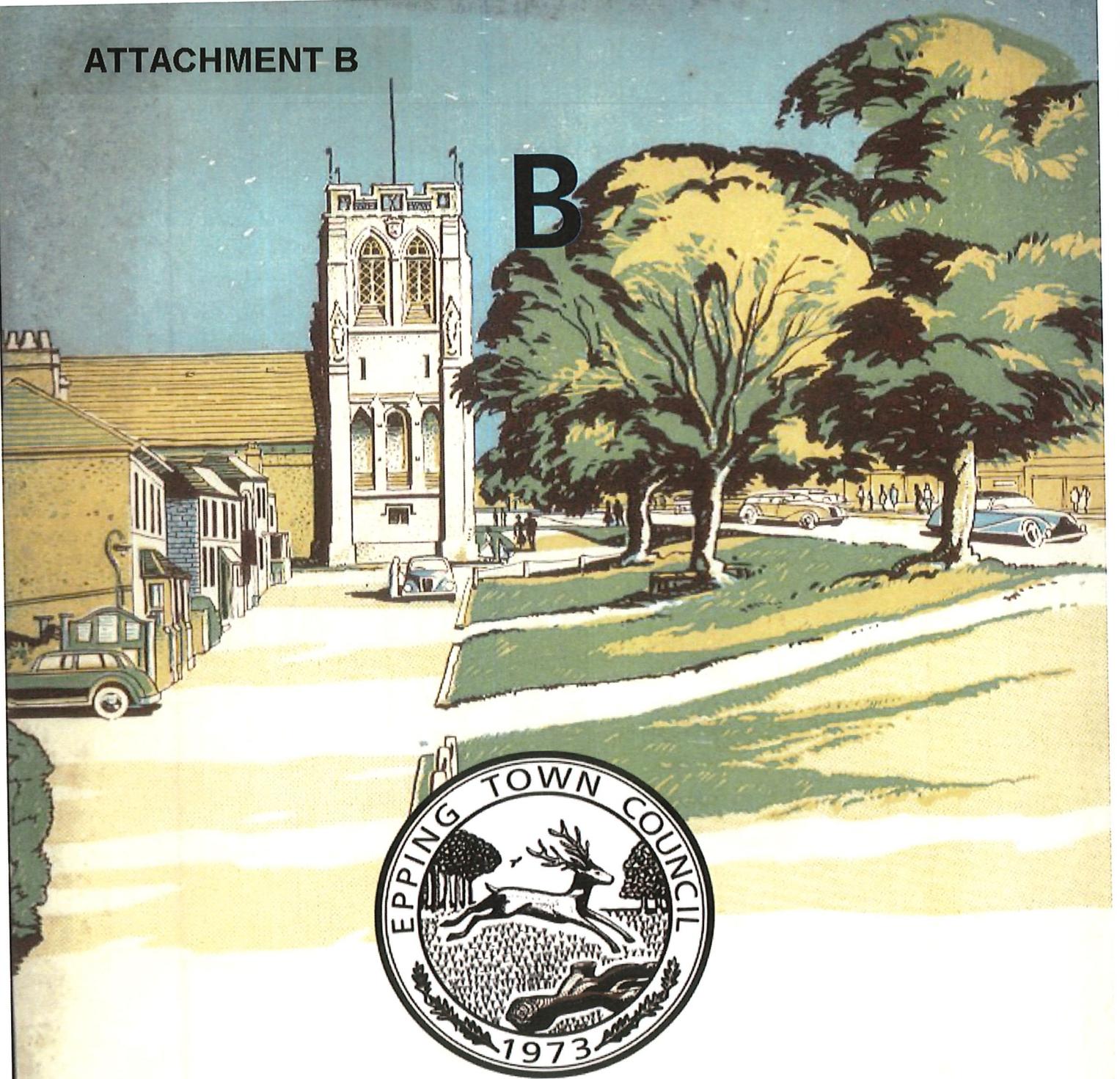
Procedure (from March 2025) Minute #463 (xvi) of 2024/25

Yearly items to Annual Council meeting

- 1) Town Clerk issues this document at every Annual Council meeting of a new Council showing the Policies in place and their date for review
- 2) In each new Council term eg 2023-2027, 2027-2031 etc, all policies will be reviewed at Corporate Governance in October Year 1 of the new Council (2027, 2031, etc) or February Year 1 of the new Council (2028, 2032, etc), in accordance with the existing review dates in the table above

- 3) Review dates must be kept up to date in the table
- 4) All documents should be dated with date of next review due
- 5) If a legislation change or 'trigger incident' requires a policy to be renewed earlier, it should be reviewed, redated and the table updated accordingly
- 6) Any new policies should be added to the table as they are approved with the relevant dates and review schedule
- 7) **Data Protection Officer requirement: revisit this after each new Council (October after new Council. Last on October 2025 CGAC. Agenda item 23) Changed BR Feb 26**
- 8) **IT Policy and Data Retention Policy added March 2026 (Assertion 10 AGAR)**

B



STANDING ORDERS

MARCH 2025

EXISTING

14. Code of conduct complaints

- a ~~Upon notification by the District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the Council.~~
- b ~~Where the notification in standing order 14(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined [(England) and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d) below].~~
- c ~~The Council may:~~
- i. ~~provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;~~
 - ii. ~~seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;~~
 - iii. ~~[(Wales) indemnify the councillor or non-councillor with voting rights in respect of his related legal costs and any such indemnity is subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council.]~~
- d Upon notification by the **District or Unitary Council** that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

15. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
- i. at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, a committee and a sub-committee serve on councillors, by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed

approval before 30 June.

18. Financial controls and procurement

- a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
- i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. ~~procurement policies (subject to standing order 18(c) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where a contract has an estimated value of less than £25,000.~~
 - vi. ~~The procurement and award of contracts covered by the 2015 Regulations which have an estimated value of £25,000 or more must satisfy the requirements of the 2015 Regulations which include use of the Contracts Finder website, regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity.~~
- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- ~~c Financial regulations shall confirm that a proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 18(d) below and in a manner compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).~~
- d Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. ~~the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate (see vii);~~
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer or submitted by email marked private and confidential which shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
 - vii. ~~The procurement and award of contracts covered by the 2015 Regulations which have an estimated value of £25,000 or more must satisfy the requirements of the 2015 Regulations which include use of the Contracts Finder website.~~
- e Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the ~~Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016~~ apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council or another Committee is subject to standing order 11 above.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Town Mayor or, if he is not available, the Deputy Town Mayor of any significant absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting. Significant absence is defined as (i) a single absence lasting more than 8 working days, (ii) 3 periods of absence in any rolling 12 month period or a pattern of absences that does not otherwise fall within (i) or (ii) above.



MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2025 UPDATE (ENGLAND)

the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required] OR [at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].

- h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:

- i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
- ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
- iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

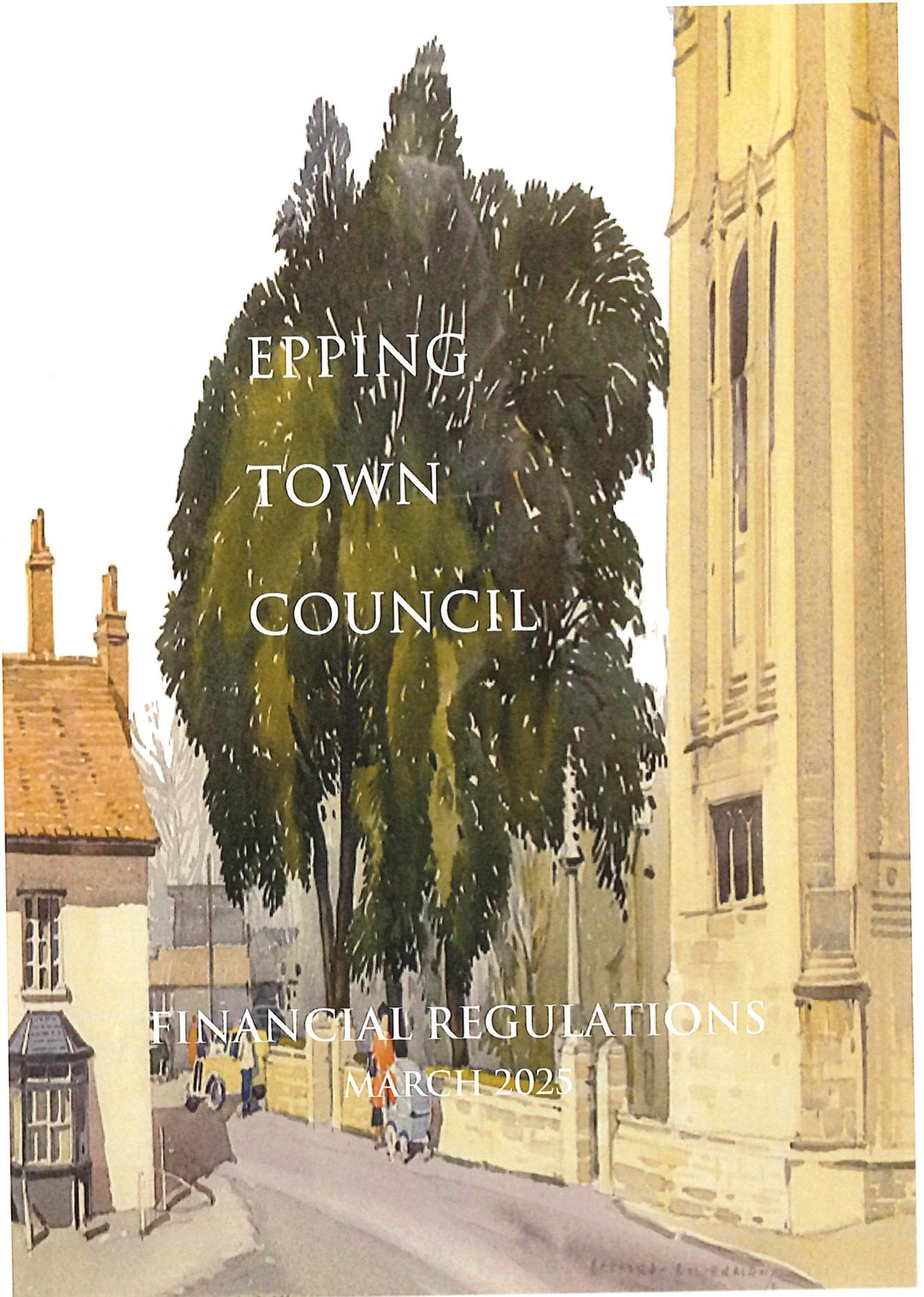
- d. As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e. The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. **FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT**

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and

- v. whether contracts with an estimated value below [60,000] or due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS



EPPING
TOWN
COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS
MARCH 2025

EXISTING

- 4.6. The draft budget forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the budget working party and a recommendation made to the council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and forecast, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget. Epping Town Council submit by the end of January each year.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

EXISTING

MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

This Model Financial Regulations template was produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in March 2025 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

Notes to assist in the use of this template:

- 1) This document is a model for councils of all sizes to use to develop their own financial regulations, suitable for the size of the council and the activities it undertakes.
- 2) Bold text indicates legal requirements, which a council cannot change or suspend.
- 3) For the rest, each council needs to adapt the model to suit its size and structure. For example, some councils have both a clerk and RFO, possibly with several more staff, while others have a single employee as clerk/RFO. Some councils have committees, some have a high level of delegation and some make all decisions at full council meetings. Many now use online payment methods, but others still rely on cheques.
- 4) Curly brackets indicate words, sentences or sections that can be removed if not applicable, or amended to fit the council's circumstances. An example of this is the phrase {or duly delegated committee}, which can be deleted if there are no committees.
- 5) Specific areas that may need adapting:
 - a) In 1.5 – is the Clerk the RFO?
 - b) In 3.3 and 3.4, the words “Governance and Accountability” do not apply in Wales
 - c) In section 4, does the council have committees and how many years are forecast?
 - d) In 5.6, does the council issue an open invitation to tender, or invite specific firms?
 - e) In 5.9, are online prices acceptable evidence?
 - f) In 5.13, 5.15 and 5.17, does the council have committees?
 - g) In 5.16, will a councillor ever be instructed to place an order?
 - h) In 5.20, is there a minimum level for official orders?
 - i) Section 6 includes several alternatives to cover delegation to committees or to officers, approval of invoices individually or in batches, or for approval of regular contractual payments at the beginning of the year.
 - j) Sections 7, 8 and 9 also includes several alternatives, including wording for where the clerk is a signatory. These are intended to allow a council's financial regulations to fit what they actually do, not to force any council to change what they do.
 - k) Section 10 gives two alternatives, with or without petty cash.
 - l) 13.6 has alternatives for VAT-registered and unregistered councils – only use one.
 - m) 13.7 and 13.8 are removable if they don't apply to the council.

- 4.6. The draft budget {with any committee proposals and [three-year]} forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the {finance committee and a recommendation made to the} council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and [three-year] forecast, the council shall determine its [council tax (England)/budget (Wales)] requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than [the end of January] for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council {or relevant committee}.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed [£60,000] including VAT, the Clerk shall {seek formal tenders from at least [three] suppliers agreed by [the council]} OR {advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation}. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**

RISK REGISTER - EPPING TOWN COUNCIL - MARCH 2026

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

	Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Severity	Control Measure	Review frequency	Alternative Review trigger	Responsible Person/s
1.	Lack of forward planning and financial/ budgetary controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of direction and prioritisation Needs of those in partner organisations not addressed Poor financial control Loss of respect and reputation 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business/action plan in operation In year budget reviews Feedback from Partners Monthly reconciliation for all accounts 	Annually Quarterly As required Monthly	Unexpected expense	Clerk/RFO & All Members
2.	Council lacks relevant skills and commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council fails to achieve its purpose Decision making bypasses Council Poor value for precept money Council ignores advice of Clerk . 	L	H	Whilst difficult with democratic election process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to select carefully Ongoing training for Councillors Close review of attendance Ongoing training for Clerk 	Annually & ongoing Every meeting Ongoing	Poor decisions through lack of knowledge	Chairman of Council
3.	Council becomes dominated by one or two or cliques form (Illegitimate Party dominance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicts of interest Pursuit of personal agendas Decisions made outside Council Loss of interest by excluded members 	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear Standing Orders regarding conduct of meetings and Conflict of Interests Clerk monitors Chairman monitors Select carefully 	Annually (or through CGAC when legislation changes) Ongoing monitoring		Chairman/Clerk

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

4.	Councillors benefiting from being on Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affect reputation Conflicts of Interest 	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear Standing Orders Open system of payment Robust Internal Audit 	Annually All meetings		Chairman Clerk Internal Auditor
5.	Poor reporting to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor quality decision making Council becomes ill informed Clerk fails to keep Council informed 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely and accurate financial reporting Clear instructions to staff Regular project reports Clerk's ongoing training Clerk to ensure good reporting to Council Clerk appraisal 	Quarterly Ongoing Each meeting Ongoing	Reminder from District and County Project Problem	Clerk/Chairman
6.	Loss of key staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure in budgetary controls Correspondence backlog Lack of knowledge/loss of experience 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Succession Planning Clear office procedures Clear budgetary procedures Monitor remuneration packages Up to date job descriptions Good handover arrangements Ongoing communication and sharing of information Staff development and training 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Loss of staff member	Chairman/Clerk /All staff

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

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7.	Inadequacy of Precept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services not provided Lack of confidence in Council Strong budgeting process 	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular in year budget reviews Detailed budget setting process and monitoring of funds Regular highlighting of any potential forthcoming high costs/necessary expenditure 	Every Council Meeting Annually & ongoing Ongoing as required	Unexpected event i.e. flooding	Clerk & All Members
8.	Failure to respond to electors wish to right of inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of confidence Loss of reputation 	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear Standing Orders and Operating Protocols Adherence to Audit Regulations 	Annually Annually		Clerk
9.	Failure to register Members interests, gifts, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member could make inappropriate gains Could affect reputations 	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear code of conduct Clear procedure monitoring interests Clerk monitors 	Annually		Individual Member Clerk
10.	Failure to meet the requirements for LCAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status Reputation 	M	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor requirements for LCAS High standards 	As required		Clerk
11.	Poor document control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not passed on in a timely manner Deadlines missed Lack of achievement 	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear Standing Orders Clear Job Descriptions Clear Office Procedures Good communication Ongoing policy document review timetable 	Annually Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing		Clerk/All staff

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

12.	Lack of maintenance of Council owned property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High cost of repair Injury to 3rd party leading to claims Damage to property 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stock condition survey Regular routine maintenance Insurance cover Interim insurance updates if necessary 	Ongoing As required Annually Ongoing	Unexpected Natural Disaster Acquisitions /disposals	Clerk
13.	Damage or loss to Council owned property by 3 rd party or act of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High cost of repair 	H	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance cover Good Fire Alarm Good Burglar Alarm Regular Maintenance Inspection 	Annually Ongoing		Clerk
14.	Damage to 3 rd party property or individual due to service or amenity provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claim against Council 	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance Regular checks of facilities Risk Assessments 	As required Ongoing Annually	Annually As reported	Clerk
15.	Loss of cash through fraud or dishonesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in available funds Loss of reputation 	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear financial procedures Adequate insurance cover Verify & attach copy order to invoice Fidelity guarantee cover (insurance) 	Annually Annually One offs Annually	On a Loss	All Members Clerk Internal Auditor
16.	Problems due to borrowing or lending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of 3rd party to repay loan Inability of Council to repay a loan Poor investments 	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include in annual budget Clear Standing Orders Office Procedures Review investments 	Quarterly reviews Annually Ongoing Annually	Economic	Clerk/Members

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

					regularly • Strong Financial Key Member		climate	
17.	Failure to use grants for purpose for which they were intended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of funds for project for which grant was intended Investigation into the use of funds 	L	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear minutes Ensure funds properly ring fenced Clear financial procedures Review of funds 	Ongoing Ongoing Annually		Clerk
18.	Ensure Council complies with law, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety Equal Opportunities Data Protection Human Rights Disability and Discrimination Employment Law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fines and Penalties from regulation bodies Employee action for negligence of grievance Risk of reputation 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Standing Orders and Procedures Clear Job Descriptions Comprehensive Risk Assessments Ongoing training as legislation changes Professional membership such as EALC/NALC 	Annually Ongoing Annually Ongoing		Clerk/Members
19.	Risk of acting without proper powers. (Ultra vires)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Loss – Criminal Charges Loss of respect and reputation Loss of confidence 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure powers are researched and stated in Agenda reports Ongoing training for Clerks and councillors 	All meetings		Clerk/Members

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim against Council • Lack of knowledge 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Clerk 			
20.	Risk of increasing regulatory burden preventing performance of work benefiting the parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased complaints from Precept payers • Staff stress and retention problems • Poor relationship between Officers and Members 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Members are advised of regulatory demands and the effect of these demands on workload • Ensure the Members respond to consultations on regulatory issues • Pressure on employees/workload is monitored by the Clerk 	As required Monthly meetings & Ongoing Ongoing & annually		Clerk
21.	Failure to identify Risks facing the Council & to put measures in place to mitigate such risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council encounters serious challenges for which no pre-planning has been undertaken 	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk to review risk register & make appropriate recommendations • Senior member of staff monitoring as a back up 	Annually	Serious challenge	Clerk & All Members
22.	Dramatic fall in investment and trading income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme difficulty in achieving budget targets for that financial year 	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Budget monitoring – Clerk and Members must be aware of the risks and consequence of poor financial performance. • A significant fall in income must be balanced with 	Monthly		Clerk, Finance Key Member and Council

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placing of deposits with one source (Council not protected by the FSCS guarantee of £75,000) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> spending cuts or a drawdown of reserves (whichever is appropriate see 23 below). Spread investments across banks/building societies 	Annually/as required		
23.	Inadequate Reserve funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year end cash flow difficulties and/or failure to meet unforeseen expenditure (may result in need for unplanned and expensive borrowing) Unable to deliver service and functions 	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Year end General Reserve level at between 3 to 6 months of the anticipated total expenditure. Maintain adequate levels of specific reserves for known recurrent spending priorities. Understanding of the function of funds and their importance 	<p>Budget setting process and review in relation to ad hoc spending requests</p> <p>Ongoing training for Clerk/Cllrs</p>		Clerk, Finance Key Member and Council
24.	Significant loss of computer facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of administrative capacity 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain electronic backups both onsite and offsite Maintain separate off site backup of accountancy data. Maintain battery backup to server (until server not used) Maintain contract with computer 	Ongoing	Cyber attack or threat of cyber attack or breakdown	Clerk

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

					<p>maintenance (good IT support)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor IT support and update as appropriate 			
25.	Loss of business continuity and income due to movement of premises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of income/uncertainty/difficulty in maintaining services and functions 	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong details and safeguards in contract • Strong lawyer • No movement of premises without alternative premises • Negotiations with community partners for to form back up plans • (Unforeseen loss of income/business continuity managed through insurance) • Adequate support required to facilitate a large-scale move 	<p>Through any applicable contract negotiation and forward planning</p> <p>Long enough timescales to prepare and plan</p>	Problem with development	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Chairman</p> <p>All members</p>
26	Loss of continuity through a change of Council due to elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of knowledge and experience • Risk of poor decisions 	M	M/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong/clear procedures in place which are followed • Qualified Town Clerk • Members to share knowledge amongst themselves to assist newer councillors • Strong auditing checks 	<p>Election time</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Poor decisions	<p>Clerk</p> <p>All members</p>
27	Loss of interest in Council's affairs by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor decision making • Poorer quality of work • Poor member behaviour 	M	L/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement of councillors 	Ongoing	<p>Poor decisions</p> <p>Poor work</p>	<p>Clerk/Chairman</p> <p>/</p> <p>All members/</p>

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

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	councillors and staff	affecting the whole Council including Council's reputation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual involvement of staff in projects and training Sharing of information Interesting projects Staff monitoring and development Reminder of the importance of team working Regular reminders of proper practice/process External reporting of poor behaviour 		Feeling of apathy	All staff
28	Unexpected health emergency/ situation (such as Covid 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to work in the normal manner Remote working which may lead to gaps in service/provision 	M/H	L/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of remote working methods if needed Team covering different functions so sharing of tasks Strong, diverse team who are multi-skilled in basic daily operations Regular team meetings to ensure engagement Regular contact to ensure continuity 	Health emergency • Requirement for home working	Long term absence Building failure eg fire/flood	Clerk/All staff/Council
29	Failure to fill all Council seats at an election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less input and potential diversity of opinion Less combined knowledge/experience 	M	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing members training Qualified Clerk Process for 	4 yearly after elections If required	Elections Vacant member seat	Clerk/Council

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

					advertising vacant Council seats			
30	Failure to understand the implications of making financial cuts/not listening to advice and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not upgrading cyber security or continuing professional advice and support memberships to save money (EALC, NALC, SLCC, ICCM, NAMBA) Cyber security and legal updates/knowledge becomes out of date exposing/increasing risk 	M	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing members training Qualified Clerk Listening to advice of Clerk and others Allocating sufficient budget to cover adequate support and memberships 	Memberships renewals Ongoing	Awareness of out of date software or advice	Clerk
31	Data breach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human error Cyber security becomes out of date exposing/increasing risk IT Policy not adhered to (computer and password use and protection) 	M	L/M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing cyber protection checked (annually) Ongoing IT checks Staff and member training 	Annual and ongoing	Data breach or near miss	Clerk/Staff/Members IT support
32	Local Government Reorganisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of understanding resulting in incorrect structure Burden taking on additional responsibilities without the financial support to go with it 	M	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing progress review Serious consideration given to any asset transfers 	Ongoing Through consultations	LGR approaching	Clerk/Members/Partner support organisations/ Other Councils

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2025 (Council). Review date: Feb 2026 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL ASSET REGISTER**31st March 2026**

The form of this asset register was adopted following receipt of advice from Peter Lacey of NALC/SLCC and a discussion with Jo Taylor of the Audit Commission (29th March 2010). It was reviewed by council in October 2012 (Minutes #201 & #222 of 2012/13 refer).

This Asset Register has four main purposes.

- a. It forms a basis for completion of box 9 in the 'Annual Return.'
- b. It forms a basis for decisions on risk and insurance issues.
- c. It provides information on the condition and need for replacement of machinery items.
- d. It provides assurance of the continued existence of Council's property

Annual Return – Fixed Assets

Items of machinery and equipment which have a useful life of more than one year and with a value greater than £1,000 are defined as 'Fixed Assets.' These are itemised below and their value reported in box 9 of Council's 'Annual Return.' Council does not depreciate or adjust fixed asset values and they are not calculated as part of a balance sheet. For fixed assets Council must approve the valuation methodology which must be applied consistently year on year. The preferred value will be the original acquisition cost. Alternative acceptable valuations are the replacement cost at a particular date or an insurance cost at a particular date. A fourth method of valuation for land or buildings which only have community value will be a nominal value of £1 (but please note the war memorial is listed at its original cost in 1922 of £650. The fixed asset value for any individual item will not usually be altered from year to year. Therefore, a change in the total value for fixed assets (in box 9 of the Annual Return) indicates the acquisition of new and/or the disposal of old assets of significance.

It will be necessary to review the threshold value for fixed assets (currently £1,000) annually to ensure the value continues to include the types of items currently listed as fixed assets. Such a review will require the revaluation of both the current and previous years' asset registers to give a consistent basis for comparison.

Insurance Decisions

From the above it follows that not all assets are classed as 'Fixed Assets.' The guidance indicates that only items with a relatively high value which will be useful for more than one financial year are entered to the 'Fixed Asset' box 9 on the Annual Return. Council has many smaller items which individually have a replacement value less than £1,000 (small tools, furniture, benches etc.). These items are listed in inventories and the total for any given inventory may far exceed £1,000. The total value of inventories may alter quite rapidly as new items are entered or removed. It is still necessary to ensure these items are secured to the council and to assess the risks of loss so that suitable insurance may be maintained if necessary. For these reasons the inventories are updated and reviewed annually. As a guide to these insurance decisions, an attempt will be made to maintain a replacement value for inventory items as well as for relevant fixed asset items. It will be necessary for Council to review the insurance valuation each year to ensure insurance levels remain relevant to the inventoried items. This should be undertaken at the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee meeting each February. This should be done annually, even if Council enters into a three-year insurance policy. Premiums are likely to increase annually even during a three-year arrangement, as Insurance Premium Tax changes and Council's assets may change.

Not all items are insured for damage or loss since the nature of risks is not the same for all items. Larger items of play equipment are very robust and comprise a number of smaller components. Damage to other items may be assessed as unlikely to occur or of insignificance cost if it does. Historically, Council has generally not insured play equipment, seats, bins or signs. These are now insured. Playground surfaces are, however, not insured, as they are very difficult to remove and have little use or value once removed to record as an asset. Some items are insured on all risks. These include laptops, audio visual equipment, the Mayor's Chain and tools. Vehicles are all insured on a fully comprehensive basis.

Replacement Decisions

Decisions to replace machinery and tools may be affected by the residual value/life of the existing equipment and the cost of replacement.

FIXED ASSETS

At 31st March 2026 the following assets were held:

Buildings	£3,986,681
Play Equipment and Street Furniture	£ 317,905
Road Legal Vehicles and Equipment	£ 83,381
Plant Machinery and Non-Road Registered Vehicles	£ 52,413
Civic Regalia	£ 18,035
Office Equipment	£ 9,233
Land (page)	£ 7
Total of Fixed Assets for Annual Return as at 31st March 2026:	£4,467,655

Total of Fixed Assets as at 31st March 2025: £4,467,960

Variance 31st March 2025 - 31st March 2026: £305

Explanation of Variance:

Total of Fixed Assets added during the year (includes corrections) £1195

Total of Fixed Asset removed during the year (includes corrections) £1500

Sum Variance £305

Deed No.	Description	Size	Tenure	Acquisition Date	Buildings	(1)Uses	(2)Covenants etc	Value
L001	Land at Lindsey St Community Association	17,250 sq.ft	Freehold	14/3/2008	Lindsey Street Community Association premises (not ETC)	Freehold acquired from EFDC 2008 Lease renewal with Community Assoc commenced June 2008 (See Note A below)	Covenants: Community use Utility easement	£1
L002	Stonards Hill Recreation Ground, Stonards Hill	15.109 A	Freehold	?/3/1947	Scout hut (not ETC) Band hut (not ETC) Jack Silley Pavilion Garage Workshops House no 7	Ground leased to 4 th Epping Scouts Ground leased to EF Band Tied rental to Groundsman (See Note B below)	Covenants: Community centre Recreation ground Games and community Utility easements Handgate licences 6a Palmers Hill Vehicle (Currently not operative with current owner) s.106 obligation planting footpath	£1
L003	Lovelock's Field, Swaines Green	1.78 Ha	Freehold	15/8/2005	None	(See Note C below)	Covenants: Open Meadow with public access. Various access licences in operation. Listed elsewhere in this document FI.	£1
L004	Meadow Road Allotments, Meadow Road	17.05A	Freehold	29/9/1980	None	Allotments (part) 13.42 A Leased for agriculture to N Pegrum (See Note D Below)	Utility easement handgates	£1
L007	Lower Bury Lane Allotments, Off Tower Road	0.75 Ha	Freehold	9/1/1957	None	Allotments	Pedestrian access only	£1
L008	Epping Cemetery, Bury Lane	6.328 A	Freehold	17/8/1910	Chapel			£1
L012	Ivy Chimney's Recreation Ground	0.56 Ha	Possessory title lodged	N/A	None	Adverse Possession claimed 2007	Utility easement footpath	£1

			27/4/2007. Absolute title granted Aug 2019.			Title Absolute granted after 27/4/2019. (Land Registration Act 2002 s.62.4) Granted August 2019.		
	Total							£7

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF VEHICLES

FA 1 Road legal vehicles and equipment

£83,381

Description	Year of Purchase	Purchase Cost	Estimated Replacement Cost	Estimated Current Value	Estimated Residual Life (years)	Registration Number	Inventory No	Estimated replacement date
Ford Tractor 2120	1996	18,400	28000	3500	1 (Repaired 2016 Life expectancy increased from 1 yr to 5)	P559 OAR	41	Max 2022
Ford Transit Connect	2010	5,560	10,000	500	0	YE56 KEJ	65	2019 (2020)
Comment: Next for replacement. 2021. Already exceeded life expectancy.								
Toyota Hi-lux Invincible 4X4 D-4D (s/hand 2014)	2017	16,499	17,000	15,000	6	YF64 CZP	XX	2027
*Tractor Iseki TK532 (market use)	2010	7,500	25000	3500	2	T915 JUJ	64	2023
Comment: Tractor had full service in 2018/19 financial year, new tyres and extras. This has extended life expectancy. Already exceeded life expectancy.								
Ransomes Jacobson Highways 3 Mower	2016	21,950	29000	20000	3	EX63 VDV	XX	2024
Ford Transit Courier	2021	13,472	13,742	13,742	8	WX69 LXB	XX	2030
Total for Annual Return		83,381						

FA 2 Plant Machinery and Non Road Registered Vehicles

Annual Return Value

£52,413

(Stonards Hill)

Equipment	Year of Purchase	Purchase Cost £	Estimate of Replacement Cost £	Estimate of Current Value £	Estimate of residual life	Inventory No
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Bateson Trailer	1994	1995	3500	400	2	38
Four Way Bucket	1996	3600	6000	2000	2	41
Charterhouse Vertidrain s/h	2001	5700	19000	1500	2	46
Teleshore – Grave shoring large	2014	1737	2000	1737	5	
Teleshore – Grave shoring small	2014	2000	2000	2000	5	
5.7KVA Generator	2002	1500	3300	800	4	48
Rabbit brushcutter	2008	4500	5000	3000	7	61
Komatsu Mini Digger (S/Hand)	2006	8500	19000	8000	4	57
Kuhn Comete Spreader	2006	1562	2000	500	2	58
Indispension 2 ton trailer	2007	1550	2000	1500	6	59
Stihl multi unit/saw/trimmer ext.	2014	1000	1000	1000	5	
Billy Goat leaf blower	2015	1090	1090	1000	5	
Rotavator	2016	1000	1000	1000	5	
Thwaites 300	2017	3000	3000	3000		
Brendon Mobile Power Washer	2017-18	2200	2200	2200		
Textron Jacobson mower	2024	10750	17500	10750		
Bunded fuel tank 2500 ltr Ston Hill	2022	2229	2672	2672		
Total for Annual Return		52413				

Nb. Items with a very low residual life may still be retained if they are useful but have deteriorated to a condition where they are potentially subject to extensive maintenance costs

FA 3 Office Etc. Equipment – Epping Hall (Annual Return Value)

£9,233

Description	Insurance Category	Date of purchase	Purchase Cost £	Replacement Cost £	Condition
Cooker Falcon	A	2000	1583		Good
Asber Tech Enviro 500mm Dishwasher 30A & DP	A	2020	1150		Excellent
4 drawer Fire Proof Cabinet	A	2007	1858		Good
Fujitsu fileserver	C	2015	1350		Good
Hand held radio mic system	D	2016	1051		Good
Tie clip radio mic system	D	2016	1051		Good
Macbook Air Laptop (Town Clerk)		2021	1190		Excellent
Total For Annual Return			9233		

(The above items are included in the contents insurance for Epping Hall)

FA 4 Play Equipment Etc. (Annual Return Value)

£317,905

Location	Description *includes wetpour	Purchase Cost £	Estimate of Replacement Cost £ (Equipment only – Wetpour and installation will approximately double cost) (All fixed items have an installation cost)
Lower Swaines (2022)	The Wizard's Hideaway house	12840	12840
	Tipi Carousel with top brace	2750	2750
	Swing frame unit	3750	3750
	Fairytale seesaw	3990	3990
	Multiplay unit	20450	20450
	Swing frame unit	3310	3310
	Mini Spacenet	11510	11510
	Cableway	7190	7190
	Cableway start station	2620	2620
	Twin ring sky carousel	2550	2550
	Bloqx 2 cube	6570	6570
	Five way swing	5030	5030
	Multigoal 8m wide	5210	5210
Parklands Coopersale (2018)	Speed gyro	2845	2845
	Small pod swing	2020	2020
	Combination swings metal	1440	1440
	Diabolo Multiplay unit	5025	5025
	Junior metal horizontal bars	1245	1245
Stonards Hill (play area)	Double junior swing	3500	3750 1535
	Double infants swing	3500	3750 1535
	Sutcliffe toddler zone unit DZW267) (2008)	13036	14000
	Sutcliffe spring seesaw TNB030)	2148	2300
	Sutcliffe nest swing SNS080)	2266	2500
	Flywheel roundabout 2022	5660	5660
	Plastic play logs 2022	10920	10920
	Climber play logs 2025	1195	1195
Stonards Hill	Sutcliffe Winer Diner Picnic bench	1000	1000
	Outdoor table tennis table	1478	1478
	Outdoor gym	10500	15000
St. Hill (skateboard park)	Whiteskate concrete skate park (2007)	32248	32000
Stonards Hill tennis court	Tennis court floodlights (1992)	6386	14000
Ivy Chimneys	Multiplay*)	13500	17600
	Double junior swing 1) (1993)	3500	3750 1535
	Double Junior Swing 2)	3500	3750 1535
	Double infant swing)	3500	3750 1535
	Timber trail (2003)*	4572	4600 2933
	Mantis zipwire 2015	3569	3569
	Spinmee roundabout 2015	4105	4105
	Maliton 2015	9610	9610
	Basket swing and seat 2015	2510	2510

Frampton Road	Flat & cradle swing (2017)	1627	1627
	Multiplay Kiboko (2017)	9573	17600
	Football wall/basketball (2003)	1760	3156
	Basket swing (2017)	1900	1900
	DDA roundabout (2017)	5000	5000
	Adult exercise cycle (2017)	1654	1654
	Adult exercise skier (2017)	2494	2494
	Wooden train set (2017)	1069	1069
Town Greens Palmers Hill	Wooden Town Sign (2011)	1650	2000
High Road (Beech Close)	Wooden Town Sign (2014)	1800	1800
o/s Church, High St	Bus Shelter (2008)	7300	8000
Opposite Church, High St	Bus shelter (2008)	7300	8000
Palmers Hill, East side	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
Palmers Hill West side	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
The Plain, o/s St Marg H	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
The Plain near Coop'sale	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
Tesco, High Street	Notice Board 2015	1010	1010
Market Store, opposite M&S	Notice Board 2015	1010	1010
Station Road	Notice Board 2015	1010	1010
Total for Annual Return		317905	

FA 5 Community Buildings

£3,986,681

Deed No.	Description	Tenure	Acquisiti on Date	Uses	Value	Valuation basis
	Market Garage, R/O High Street, Epping	Freehold	2012	Storage for Market equipment	100,000	Insurance 2012
	7 Stonards Hill, Stonards Hill Recreation Ground (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Tied accommodation for Head Groundsman	117,044	Insurance 2009
	Garage, Stonards Hill Recreation Ground (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Groundsman's tool and equipment store	35,210	
	Shed, Stonards Hill Recreation Ground (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Groundsman's tool and equipment store	65,609	Insurance 2009
	Jack Silley Pavilion, Stonards Hill Rec. Grnd. (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Meeting and function rooms, changing rooms for Rec Ground	979,440	Insurance 2009
	Cemetery Chapel, Epping Cemetery, Bury Lane (L008)	Freehold	N/A	Cemetery chapel	175,983	Insurance 2009
L006	Epping Hall, St John's Road, Epping	Freehold	24/2/2000	Meeting and function rooms, Epping Town Council Offices	1,216,900	Insurance 2009
	War Memorial	Permissive (on Epping	1922	War Memorial	650	Actual cost

		Forest Land)			(1922)
Total for Annual Return				3,986,681	

*Please note: a rebuild cost assessment was undertaken in 2019 and the details are included below for information.
No value change for Annual Return.

FA 6

Other

Civic Regalia (Mayor's Chain etc.) 2009 insurance valuation

£18,035

TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS IN THIS ASSET REGISTER (FOR ENTRY TO THE ANNUAL RETURN)

£4,467,655

Notes and Inventory Items Nil Value for Annual Return

The following items are noted below as a record of items which have an individual purchase value lower than £1,000 but have a considerable value on aggregate. The inventories are checked and amended on an annual basis.

Inventory No.	Location	Replacement value	Custodian	Check date
1	Garage, shed and yard Stonards Hill	51,217 (incl 21,000 Christmas stars)	Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
2	Jack Silley Pavilion	14,086	Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
3	Cemetery Chapel	11,833	Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
4	Market	17,002	Market Supervisor Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
5	Epping Hall	59,339	Caretaker Town Clerk	2019 then 2024
6	Minor Play Equipment, Seats and Bins	57,947	Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
Total Value		211,424		

*Please note: these costs include project management and demolition so a whole rebuild cost

Rebuild cost 2019	Excl VAT	Incl VAT
1. Epping Hall	3,343,351	3,812,021
2. 7 Stonards Hill	175,500	210,600
3. Jack Silley Pavilion	1,740,960	2,089,152
4. Garage & Shed at Stonards Hill rec	146,543	175,851
5. Cemetery Chapel	315,900	379,080
6. Market store	109,440	131,328
7. Public toilets (Qualis)	209,041	250,849

Total rebuild cost	5,831,694	6,798,032
Rebuild cost 2024	Excl VAT	
1. Epping Hall	3,074,000	
2. 7 Stonards Hill	300,000	
3. Jack Silley Pavilion	1,777,000	
4. Garage & Shed at Stonards Hill rec	202,000	
5. Cemetery Chapel	1,027,000	
6. Market store	126,000	
Total rebuild cost	6,506,000	

ATTACHMENT F

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974

1. (a) The Town Clerk is responsible for the general implementation of the Policy Statement relating to the above Act which is displayed in all Council work areas.
- (b) The direct responsibility for the implementation of the policy delegated to all persons who have one or more persons under their control and the table below shows the staff to whom the policy relates.

LOCATION	EMPLOYEES AFFECTED	RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE
Council offices Epping Hall St Johns Road Epping	All Office staff	Town Clerk
Epping Hall St Johns Road Epping	All Caretaker and Cleaning staff	Caretaker
Recreation Grounds Stonards Hill Ivy Chimneys Frampton Road Lower Swaines Brook Road	All Grounds staff	Town Supervisor
Epping Cemetery Bury Lane Epping	All Grounds staff	Town Supervisor
Epping Market High Street Epping	Market Supervisor /Market team	Town Supervisor Town Clerk
Jack Silley extension toilets	Caretaker All grounds staff	Town Supervisor

- c) **Areas identified as Higher Risk:**

Epping Hall kitchen
Epping Hall office kitchen
Jack Silley Pavilion Essex Room kitchen (cooker)
Bury Lane cemetery
Epping Hall office

2. Instructions to be followed in event of emergency

(a) **GENERAL**

In an emergency action must be based upon common sense, care and acquaintance with instructions. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with the instructions which are displayed at all work areas and those contained in this book. All employees should ensure that these instructions are regularly reviewed.

(b) **FIRE**

i) RAISE THE ALARM

ii) CALL FIRE BRIGADE (DIAL 999)

Evacuate building by the approved route.

Close all doors and windows behind you if time allows.

IF fire is minor attempt to extinguish with nearest appliance.

DO NOT TAKE PERSONAL RISKS

iii) Muster at assembly point and ensure all staff and members of the public have been evacuated. Await emergency services.

iv) In the event of fire, individual instructions displayed at each work area will be followed. These show evacuation routes, location of fire appliances and telephone numbers of emergency services.

(c) **INJURY**

Basic first aid information and an adequate first aid box is maintained in each work area, together with the telephone number of the Ambulance Services and the local Hospital Casualty Department. The responsible employee will ensure that the box is replenished.

All accidents, both minor and major, must be reported to the Town Clerk by the responsible employee on the forms provided. Workplace accidents relating to the grounds team should be reported to the Town Supervisor in the first instance.

Incidents regarded as a 'near accident' should also be reported to the Town Clerk and recorded on the necessary forms.

In the event of major injury, the Ambulance Service should be called immediately and the injured person kept warm, not moved and not given food or liquid of any kind.

(d) **ELECTRIC SHOCK**

If a person suffers an electric shock **TURN OFF THE ELECTRICITY BEFORE** going to their aid.

If unable to turn off electricity endeavour to move person away from live metal by

i) using piece of dry wood (e.g. broom handle); or using piece of dry cloth or rope.

OR

ii) whilst wearing dry RUBBER gloves.

iii) ensure you are

a) standing on a DRY mat or

b) standing on a DRY piece of wood

iv) inform the Electricity Provider (UK Power Networks: 0800 3163 105)

(e) **GAS**

Suspect leaks.

i) **TURN GAS OFF** - open windows.

ii) **INFORM** the EMERGENCY GAS HELPLINE: TEL: 0800 111 999

iii) Do **NOT** use a flame to test for leaks.

iv) If you are unable to stop the gas leak evacuate the building.

(f) **TRAFFIC ACCIDENT**

A first aid box is maintained in all vehicles and **MUST** be in a prominent position. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that the box is replenished.

In the event of an accident, ambulance and police services should be informed and a full report made to the Town Clerk as soon as possible, should this be deemed necessary

Endeavour to obtain witnesses and their contact details if possible.

3. **FIRST AID**

The Offices, Shops and Railway Premises First Aid Order 1964: First aid boxes at each workplace should be provided.

Recreation ground, Jack Silley Pavilion, Epping Hall, Each vehicle, Market office.

4. To comply with existing legislation and your employer's requirements on health and safety at work all employees must:
 - a) follow the codes of practice contained in this book.
 - b) take reasonable care for the health and safety at work of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
 - c) not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare.
 - d) take care that the public is not exposed to any hazards from work processes.
5. Policies will be informed by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) as part of our statutory obligations. Policies will also reflect good/best practice and experience.
6. Staff should be vigilant at all times to health and safety risks. These will include, but are not limited to:
 - Spillages • Trip hazards • Electrical appliances • Heaters • Plugs • Lights • Uneven surfaces
7. Staff should apply their own judgement and common sense to assist with the overall safety of everyone.
8. All staff must act in accordance with government guidance in relation to the coronavirus Covid 19 health situation, including the use of hand sanitiser, self isolation if appropriate, etc. Council must ensure the correct materials and equipment are available for all staff.
9. Employees must arrive for work in a condition where they are fit for work. Epping Town Council adopt a fitness for work policy and this is attached under **Appendix 1.**
10. Epping Town Council adopt a no smoking at work policy and this is attached under **Appendix 2.**
11. Epping Town Council adopt a no alcohol and drugs policy at work and this is attached under **Appendix 3.**

GUIDE TO SAFETY AT WORK

CARETAKING AND CLEANING STAFF

The following protective clothing is issued and must be worn.

OVERALLS

RUBBER GLOVES

SAFETY GOGGLES

1.
 - a) Do not obstruct fire exits or access to fire fighting equipment
 - b) Do not remove fire extinguishers from their locations except during tests or when needed in an emergency.
2. When inspecting premises (i.e. after a letting) anything found to be faulty and likely to cause a hazard **MUST** be put out of action, suitably labelled and reported to the Town Clerk.
3.
 - a) When a fault is discovered on any electrical apparatus **DO NOT IMPROVISE.**
 - b) Hands **MUST** be dry when using electrical equipment or fittings.
 - c) When **NOT** in use electrical equipment must be disconnected from the Mains supply.
4. Care must be taken when using disinfectants and bleaching agents. After contact, thoroughly wash hands and forearms.
5. Disinfectants, cleaning agents etc., must **NOT** be put into unmarked containers, in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). Only the required quantity of chemicals should be stored and any area containing chemicals should be locked at all times.
6. After cleaning toilets, thoroughly wash hands and forearms especially before taking food and drink, smoking or attending to personal needs.
7. Cuts, scratches or grazes must be kept clean and protected with waterproof plasters.
8. Your work area must be kept tidy and upon leaving work all cleaning equipment must be put away in a safe place.
9. Do not leave spillages on the floor or buckets and brooms lying around.
10. When carrying equipment or materials up and down stairs one hand must be left free to hold the safety rail.
11. All cleaning chemicals must be kept in a locked cupboard and expiration dates monitored.
12.
 - a) All extension leads must be PAT tested
 - b) Any equipment brought in by lettings must not be used unless PAT tested

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Protruding or badly stacked furniture.
- b) Misuse of, or faults in, electrical/mechanical equipment.
- c) Misuse of cleaning chemicals.
- d) Lost footings on steps and/or stairways.

Staff/Health & Safety Act.

GUIDE TO SAFETY AT WORK

OFFICE STAFF

1. Offices must be kept tidy.
2. Passages must be kept free of obstruction.
3. Electrical/mechanical equipment must be covered/put away when not in use and disconnected from the mains supply, where possible. Items such as the photocopier, which sits on standby, may remain plugged in. Chargers must be unplugged when not in use.
4. When a fault is discovered in electrical/mechanical equipment, put out of commission, suitably label and report the defect to the Town Clerk or Town Supervisor.
5. Electrical equipment must NOT be handled whilst your hands are wet.
6. Office chemicals must NOT be put into unmarked containers, in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSH).
7. After contact with chemicals, thoroughly wash.
8. Do not store unnecessary piles of paper. All paper should be filed neatly and kept well away from any electrical equipment/potential fire risk.
9. Please be alert to potential hazards and remove the risk, where possible, in the course of your daily operations.

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Protruding office furniture.
- b) Poor and protruding cabling
- c) Misuse of, or faults in, electrical/mechanical equipment.
- d) Misuse of office chemicals.
- e) Lost footings on steps and/or stairways.

- Fire drills must be undertaken regularly
- Periodic safety inspections should be made of all premises
- All staff must receive and acknowledge receipt of the Health & Safety Policy Staff/Health & Safety Act.

GUIDE TO SAFETY AT WORK

GROUNDS STAFF

Epping Town Council provide work and safety clothing and this must be worn at all times and at the direction of your line manager. This includes:

ISSUED CLOTHING: GLOVES HARD HAT SAFETY GOGGLES STEEL-TOE CAP
BOOTS RUBBER BOOTS

- 1 Works depot to be locked at all times when not attended.
- 2 All machinery and tools to be put away/monitored when in use or out of the depot.
- 3 All staff must be trained before using any equipment
- 4 All staff must follow the guidance of their line manager
- 5 Any issues should be reported to your line manager
- 6 Fire extinguishers and relevant fire safety equipment should be checked regularly and kept in the appropriate locations for maximum effectiveness.
- 7 Fire exits must be labelled and kept free from obstruction at all times.
- 8 When inspecting premises (i.e. after a letting) anything found to be faulty and likely to cause a hazard **MUST** be put out of action, suitably labelled and reported to the Town Supervisor.
- 9 Electrical equipment should be PAT tested at least annually
- 10 Faulty electrical appliances should be removed from use until either tested or safely disposed of by the Town Supervisor.
- 11 Extreme care should be taken with the use and storage of chemicals and hands washed thoroughly after use
- 12 Any accidents should be reported in the accident book. This should include near misses. Any personal accidents should be attended to immediately and also recorded.
- 13 Disinfectants, cleaning agents etc, must **NOT** be put into unmarked containers, in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSH).
- 14 All cleaning chemicals must be kept in a locked cupboard and expiration dates monitored.
- 15 Your work area must be kept tidy and upon leaving work all cleaning equipment must be put away in a safe place.
- 16 Do not leave spillages on the floor or buckets and brooms lying around.
- 17 When carrying equipment or materials around, extreme care should be taken at all times
- 18 Be vigilant of your surroundings and any potential hazards at all times.

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Misuse of, or faults in, electrical/mechanical/specialist equipment.
- b) Misuse of cleaning chemicals.
- c) Protruding or badly stacked furniture.
- d) Lost footings on step, ladders.

Staff/Health & Safety Act.

GUIDE TO SAFETY AT WORK

CEMETERY STAFF

Epping Town Council undertake all grave digging work in Bury Lane Cemetery. Staff are trained by the Cemetery Superintendent and receive external cemetery training where necessary. Epping Town Council will respond to any additional training needs and ensure our grounds team are suitably equipped to undertake this extremely important role.

Only BRAMM registered stone masons will be permitted to work on memorial stones in Bury Lane Cemetery, to ensure best practice and high standards are adhered to.

Staff use a mini digger, shoring equipment, ladder and where necessary, dig by hand. Staff should be comfortable with the safety implications of all cemetery work and adhere to the safest practices at all times. Work undertaken includes not only grave digging, but also grass cutting, strimming, blowing and hedge maintenance.

- Graves are not left open over weekends
- Dug graves are covered
- Necessary shoring equipment is used
- Only authorised people are permitted to be near an open grave (grounds staff, undertaking team)
- Only monuments numbered on the rear by the memorial mason should be permitted to be positioned in our cemetery.

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Open graves
- b) Graves collapsing
- c) Lost footings on slippery surfaces/poor visibility/weather
- d) Crosses
- e) Surface conditions of roads/path

Staff/Health & Safety Act.

Approved: March 2025
Next review: March 2026

Epping Town Council 2025

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

I acknowledge receipt of the Policy Statement relating to the Health and Safety at Work Acts signed by the Town Clerk.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Post:..... Location:.....

(one copy of receipt retained by Town Council)
(one copy of the receipt retained by employee)

ATTACHMENT F1

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

FITNESS FOR WORK POLICY

A) PURPOSE OF POLICY

Epping Town Council requires employees to be physically and mentally performing tasks safely without risks to themselves or others. It requires all staff to report fit for duty, notifying their line manager of any potential impairments such as illness and allows occupational health assessments or fit notes to arrange any assistance or reasonable adjustments. Unfit could refer to illness, injury, stress or impairment from substances.

B) KEY RULES

- a) It is the employee's responsibility to arrive at work in a fit state, notify their manager if they believe they are unfit and adhere to safety standards. This is particularly important if using machinery or driving.
- b) Employees should advise their line manager of any concerns relating to health and safety.
- c) Managers should immediately address any concerns about their employee's fitness for work, which may include extreme fatigue or sickness and take proportionate and supportive action.
- d) Employees must provide a doctor's fit note if sickness absence exceeds 7 consecutive days.
- e) For periods of absence over four weeks, employers may refer staff for an occupational health assessment to facilitate a safe return to work.
- f) Epping Town Council will support employees and maintain confidentiality.
- g) Violations of the policy, such as attending work under the influence of drugs or alcohol, could result in extreme disciplinary action.

February 2026

Date for review: Feb 2027 (CGAC) Council March 2027

ATTACHMENT F2

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

NO SMOKING POLICY

A) POLICY CONTEXT

Epping Town Council's no smoking at work policy is designed to protect all employees, visitors and contractors from exposure to smoke, encourage a safe and healthy working environment and to comply with The Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007.

B) KEY RULES

- a) This policy applies to all staff, contractors and visitors;
- b) It covers all of Epping Town Council's indoor premises, including work vehicles and during all hours.
- c) Smoking is prohibited in all parts of buildings.
- d) Smoking is prohibited in all work vehicles and private vehicles used for business purposes
- e) This also extends to just outside building entrances and exits and near open windows
- f) This policy covers all smokable substances, including tobacco, pipes, cigars and any other smokable substances
- g) Violations of the policy could result in extreme disciplinary action.

February 2026
Date for review: Feb 2027 (CGAC) Council March 2027

ATTACHMENT F3

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY

A) ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Alcohol and drug misuse can have an adverse effect not just on an individual but on their colleagues, customers and the public. Having a safe working environment, providing excellent customer service by maintaining productivity levels and avoiding days being lost to illness are all critical to our success.

Epping Town Council requires all employees to comply with the Alcohol and Drugs Policy. Breaches of the policy will be taken very seriously and may be dealt with under the appropriate Company disciplinary procedure.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'drugs' is used to describe both illegal drugs and other psychoactive (mind-altering) substances which may or may not be illegal.

B) KEY RULES

- a) Employees must ensure that they are not intoxicated by alcohol and are free of any drugs when they report for work and that they remain so whenever they are at work;
- b) Employees must not drink alcohol during working time.
- c) The use, possession, storage, transportation, promotion and/or sale of drugs or drug equipment is forbidden during working time, in the workplace or at a customer's site;
- d) Where employees are prescribed medication or are taking over-the-counter medicines or herbal remedies that may affect their work performance or the safety of themselves or others, they must advise their Line Manager.
- e) Employees may be required to undergo testing for alcohol or drugs in their system in certain defined circumstances.

C) POLICY COMPLIANCE

Epping Town Council strongly discourages employees from drinking any alcohol prior to driving or reporting to work (including at lunchtimes), unless this is through required an/or prescribed medication.

Employees must be aware of what they drink and take into account how long it takes for the alcohol to clear their system.

Employees must not drink alcohol during working time. Working time is any time between when an employee reports for work and the time when they finish work. It includes any period of call out done whilst on standby duty or overtime working.

Employees must not have any drugs in their system when they arrive at work or at any time throughout the working day. Individuals taking illegal drugs at any time are breaking UK law and increasing the risks to their health and safety. Whilst some psychoactive substances are not illegal, they mimic the effects of illegal drugs and therefore pose the same risks to health and safety. Because of this, they are treated by the Epping Town Council in the same way as illegal drugs for the purposes of this policy.

The use, possession, storage, transportation, promotion and/or sale of drugs or drug equipment is forbidden during working time, in the workplace or at the worksite and is a breach of this policy and the law. In any of these situations the Epping Town Council may take appropriate action including disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Epping Town Council will also have a duty report any criminal activity to the relevant authorities.

D) PRESCRIBED MEDICATION

The policy does not stop employees from using prescribed medication, over-the-counter medication or herbal remedies. However, medication like tranquillisers, sleeping pills, pain-killers, decongestants, cough suppressants, antihistamines (for treatment of hay fever or other allergies) and antidepressants can make people feel drowsy and may affect their work performance or the safety of themselves or others. So, if an employee is taking any medication they should:

- a) Check the possible side effects with their doctor or pharmacist; and
- b) Let their Line Manager know in confidence, who will, if necessary, make alternative duty arrangements for them.

E) POLICY CONTEXT

Epping Town Council can be prosecuted if it knowingly allows an employee who is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs to continue working, as this places other people at risk. If an employee is obviously intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, they will be suspended from duty on contractual pay and sent home. Under this situation, an employee may be required to undergo an independent screening test. If the screening result is not available by the time they should next start work, depending on the circumstances requiring them to be tested, they will either remain suspended from duty or be re-allocated to risk-free work until the results arrive. An employee refusing to be tested under the provisions of this policy may be subject to appropriate action including disciplinary action under the Epping Town Council's disciplinary procedures, up to and including dismissal.

Employees confirmed to be in breach of the Alcohol and Drugs Policy may be subject to action under the appropriate disciplinary procedure for Epping Town Council.

All personal data collected for this purpose will be processed in line with the current Data Protection Act.

F) HELP

If an employee comes forward voluntarily and seeks help for an alcohol or drug problem they will be given help and support by Epping Town Council. If an employee thinks they have a problem and may be violating the policy as a result, it is very much in their interest to come forward and seek help voluntarily. Epping Town Council will be sympathetic and will ensure they get the help and support they need.

If an employee asks for help, the Epping Town Council will be supportive in every way possible and can suggest professional advice and help. If an employee volunteers to tell Epping Town Council that they have an alcohol or drug problem they will be treated with dignity, at all times. Any discussions will be in the strictest of confidence.

G) EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Our employees have access to a confidential service who can provide advice and guidance for employees who have an alcohol or drug problem. This is through Epping Town Council's membership to the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) through Health Assured. More details are appended to this policy and are available from the Town Clerk.

Please note: this is a health benefit which is reviewed on an annual basis in line with Council's EALC membership.

February 2026

Date for review: Feb 2027 (CGAC) Council March 2027



Your Wellbeing Services



Home Life Support

If you're having trouble balancing your budgets, debt, or civil disputes, we have expert advisors here to offer the support you need.



Work-Life Assistance

Our work-life advice is dedicated to supporting you through professional issues, whether it be returning to work or coping with change.



Physical and Emotional Health

We have a range of resources aimed to support you both physically and emotionally, from managing anxiety to simple breathing techniques.



Wellbeing Resources

We recognise the value of self-help tools, which is why we provide a range of wellbeing modules, factsheets, and invaluable video counselling.*



4-Week Health Plans

Our 4-week plans are designed to support your health goals, whether that be eating healthier, quitting smoking, sleeping better, or coping with pressure.



Mini Health Checks

How are you feeling today? Take a minute to check in with yourself by using the health checks to assess and support your health and mental wellbeing.



Health Calendar

The health calendar raises awareness of different health concerns each month, awareness days, and how to prevent issues from arising.



Wellbeing Videos

BrightTV - powered by Health Assured is a monthly series, featuring well-known personalities talking about their personal experiences with mental health.



Wisdom App

Wisdom is your guide to health and mental wellbeing. The brand-new features are designed to help track your wellness, improve your mental health.

Download the Wisdom App

Unique code:



*Clinical assessment will be needed, to help support expectations.

ATTACHMENT L

Internal Audit Report



Epping Town Council

Internal Audit 2025-26 (2nd Interim Report)

2nd March 2026

Stephen Christopher

for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background and Scope

Town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control, and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (the AGAR). Auditing Solutions Ltd has been appointed to undertake this function on behalf of Epping Town Council for the 2025-26 financial year.

This report sets out the results of our second interim audit for the year, which was undertaken on 25th February 2026. It updates the report issued on 31st October 2025 following our first interim audit visit. Once again, we wish to thank the Town Clerk and her colleagues for their assistance in enabling us to complete our audit work.

Internal Audit Approach

In carrying out our audit work for the year to date, we have regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the AGAR. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in key areas, in order to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and are fit for the purposes intended.

Our audit programme is designed to provide assurance that the Council's financial systems remain robust and operate in a manner which ensures effective probity of transactions and a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors, or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the AGAR, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

On the basis of the programme of audit work we have undertaken for the year to date, we have concluded that the Council continues to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal control. The records held in support of the accounting transactions continue to be of a high standard and provide an effective audit trail, with clear cross-referencing of all relevant documentation.

In the detailed report below, we explain the objectives of each area of our audit, summarising the work undertaken and our findings. We are pleased to report that there were no matters arising that required a formal comment or recommendation. We ask that Members consider the content of this report.

Detailed Report

Accounting records & Banking arrangements

Our objective is to confirm that the accounting records are accurate and up to date, with no anomalous entries in the cashbooks or financial ledgers, and that appropriate banking arrangements are in place.

The Council continues to maintain its accounting records using the Rialtas ‘Omega’ software, which is generally acknowledged as one of the market leaders for this tier of local government. Rialtas staff provide assistance to the Council with the year-end accounts closure.

The Council maintains current accounts with Barclays Bank and the Co-operative Bank. The latter is now used for the majority of the day-to-day transactions, with the Barclays account mainly used for direct debit payments. An on-line account is also held with the Co-operative Bank, which is controlled by the Town Clerk and is used for internet payments. In addition, the Council holds an instant access “Business Premium” account with Barclays and a “95-day Saver” account with the Nationwide Building Society.

In the course of our interim audits, we confirmed the following:

- The opening trial balance on Omega for 2025-26 agreed to the closing balances in the 2024-25 AGAR.
- The financial ledgers remained “in balance” as at 31st January 2026 - the latest completed month’s accounts at the time of our second interim audit visit.
- The accounting code structure is appropriate for the Council’s budget reporting and control requirements.
- For three sample months (May and September 2025, plus January 2026), the detailed accounting entries in the Omega cash books for the two current accounts and the online account reconciled fully to the supporting bank statements.
- The detailed transactions for the year to date on the other bank accounts reconciled fully to the supporting bank statements.
- From review of the bank reconciliations for all of the accounts, as at 30th September 2025 and 31st January 2026, there were no long-standing un-cleared items or anomalous entries.
- The bank reconciliations continue to be reviewed on a regular basis by a nominated Councillor.
- Back-ups of the Council’s IT systems are made to the Cloud by the IT support providers, RAD Group, who were appointed at the Council meeting on 14th May 2024. The Town Clerk’s computer is also backed up daily on a USB.

We note that the External Auditors completed their work on the Council’s 2024-25 AGAR and issued a clean audit certificate on 1st August 2025, with no matters arising. The outcome of the audit was reported to the Council on 9th September 2025, with the details published on the website in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Corporate Governance

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust corporate governance arrangements in place and that, as far as we may reasonably be expected to ascertain (as we do not attend Council or Committee meetings), all meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been, or are being, considered for implementation.

During the course of our interim audits, we confirmed the following:

- Our review of the agendas and minutes of the meetings of the Council and its committees held during the year to date did not identify any issues that we consider might have an adverse effect, through litigation or other causes, on the Council's future financial stability;
- The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations continue to be kept under regular review. Following revised guidance from NALC, revisions to the Financial Regulations were considered by the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee on 28th October 2025 and approved by the Council on 11th November 2025. Both the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were considered again by the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee on 24th February 2026, as there had been amendments to the NALC guidance and these are due to be approved at the Council meeting on 10th March 2026.
- A wide range of other policies and procedures are in place and these are also reviewed annually by the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee, before formal adoption by the Council.
- During the summer of 2025, the Council provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in relation to the 2024-25 accounts, in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- The Council is aware of its responsibilities in relation to digital and data compliance and is considering the steps required to ensure that it can provide a positive response to the new 'Assertion 10' included in the Annual Governance Statement of the 2025-26 AGAR. This will include consideration of whether Members should use dedicated Epping Town Council Email addresses for all correspondence. The Clerk was due to receive training on digital and data compliance requirements immediately following our second interim audit visit.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Expenditure and VAT

Our objective in this area is to ensure that:

- Council resources are released in accordance with approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;

- Any discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- An official ordering process is in place and operated for appropriate purchases, acknowledging that a range of goods and services are provided under contractual requirements (e.g., electricity supply) or legislation (e.g., non-domestic rates);
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed, and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the VAT control account for periodic recovery.

We have reviewed the procedures in place in this area, selecting a sample of payments to the end of Month 10 to check that they were made in accordance with the approved working practices and complied with the above criteria. Our testing sample for the year to date covered all individual payments over £2,500, together with a more random sample of every 35th cashbook expenditure transaction irrespective of value. The gross value of the payments examined to date totalled £247,894. We confirmed that there was appropriate supporting documentation for all payments in our sample and that, where applicable, purchase orders had been raised. There were no matters arising.

We have confirmed that VAT Returns continue to be submitted quarterly in electronic format, as required by extant legislation, with the detail being reconciled to the Omega financial ledger. At the time of our second interim audit, the returns for the first three quarters of the financial year had been submitted and reimbursement received from HMRC.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potentially significant areas of risk of either a financial or health & safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

During our audit work to date, we have confirmed the following:

- The Council's 'risk management statement' (overall risk management policy) was reviewed by the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee on 28th October 2025 and was approved by the Council on 11th November 2025.
- The detailed 'internal risk register' was subsequently reviewed by the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee on 24th February, who have recommended it for approval by the Council on 10th March 2026. This timescale will ensure that the Council satisfies the regulatory requirement to assess its significant risks and review the arrangements to manage them within the financial year (AGAR Section 1, Assertion 5).
- The main insurance cover continues to be provided by Zurich Municipal. This year, the Council entered into a new 3-year contract, which runs until 30th June 2028. The current year's policy includes Public Liability cover of £15 million, Employer's Liability of £10 million and Fidelity Guarantee of £1 million. This level of cover is in

line with other similar sized local authorities and would appear to be adequate to meet the current needs of the Council. Separate insurance policies are in place for vehicles (also with Zurich Municipal) and cyber risk (with OSR).

- As part of the Council's wider health and safety arrangements, a regular programme of reviews of the five playgrounds and the play equipment is undertaken. This includes weekly inspections by the Council's own staff and quarterly inspections by the Town Supervisor, who is a qualified play inspector. These are supplemented by annual external inspections carried out by the Play Inspection Company to assess compliance with national regulatory standards, principally British Standard EN 1176.

The latest annual external inspections were completed on 21st May 2025, with a summary of the key issues arising and action required reported to the Council on 8th July 2025. We note that there no areas of "high risk" were identified. We have confirmed with the Town Clerk that the key actions identified by the annual inspections, together with other matters highlighted by the Town Supervisor's own inspections, are addressed on a timely basis.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Budget Setting, Budgetary Control and Reserves

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust processes for identifying and approving future budgetary requirements and the level of Precept to be drawn down from Epping Forest District Council, and that effective budget monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place. We also consider whether the Council is retaining appropriate funds in earmarked and general reserves, both to finance its ongoing spending plans and to cover any unplanned expenditure that might arise.

From our review of the minutes and discussions with the Town Clerk, we confirmed that, in line with the sound approach adopted in previous years, budget monitoring reports continue to be considered at each Council meeting - with the position for the year to 31st January 2026 taken to the Council meeting on 10th February 2026. We understand that there are no significant areas of concern at this stage.

Initial consideration of the 2026-27 budget was given at the Council meeting in December 2025. Final approval of the budget and Precept requirements was given by the Council at its meeting on 13th January 2026, where the decision was made to request a Precept of £666,977, compared to £645,791 in 2025-26. After taking into account changes to the tax base, this equates to an increase of £3.16 per annum for a Band D property.

We note that the budget setting process included a detailed assessment of general and earmarked reserve requirements, taking into account concerns that these are currently too low. In determining the 2026-27 budget, the Council has planned to increase in its overall reserves of approximately £50,000 by the year-end. The main increases will be a contribution of £25,000 to the Capital/Assets Reserve and a contribution of £20,000 to establish a new Playground Reserve. We note that the Council's medium-term plan is to make a similar level of contributions to these reserves over the next five years.

We will review the 2025-26 revenue outturn, including the year-end reserves position, at our final audit visit for the year.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Income

Our objective is to assess whether the Council has appropriate procedures in place to ensure that all income due is identified, invoiced (where appropriate), recovered and banked in a timely manner. In addition to the Precept and any specific grants that it obtains, the Council receives income from a number of sources; principally, hire of the Jack Silley Pavilion and the Epping Hall, the cemetery, the weekly traders' markets, allotments and events.

During our interim audits, we confirmed the following:

- Fees and charges: The Council continues to review its fees and charges on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process and these are published on the website:
- Cemetery: We reviewed the burial records and associated documentation for the first five months of the year, confirming that all required documentation had been obtained and that the invoices raised subsequently were correct and were paid promptly.
- Hall hire: We tested the income relating to the hire of the Jack Silley Pavilion and Epping Hall by reference to the Rialtas bookings diary for a sample week (week commencing 26th May 2025), confirming that the bookings records reconciled to the sales invoices raised and that the correct hire fees had been charged and subsequently collected.
- Market traders: We reviewed the records relating to a sample market day (1st September 2025), confirming that all regular hirers who are licence holders had been invoiced for the month and that other regular and casual hirers in attendance on that day had been charged the correct fee. We also confirmed, for a sample of the licence holders, that licences are held on file. There were no matters arising.
- Allotments: The current allotment year commenced on 1st April 2025. We reviewed the records maintained in relation to the Council's allotment sites at Meadow Road and Lower Bury Lane, to confirm that these are up to date. For a sample of allotment holders, we confirmed that there were signed allotment agreements on file, that the current year's rents had been charged in line with the fees advertised on the website and that payment had been received. We noted that there were still a few instances where the current year rents remained outstanding, but confirmed that these are being actively followed up. We will check the position again at the year end.
- Receipt of income: As noted earlier in this report, we have checked and agreed a sample of three months' cashbook receipts to the relevant bank statements; and
- Outstanding debts: From a review of the Omega records, we confirmed that the overall level of outstanding debtors is low. Effective control arrangements remain in place, with appropriate action being taken in relation to outstanding payments due. At the time of our second audit visit, a review of old outstanding allotment debts had just been completed and the Town Clerk has authorised the write-off a number which were deemed to be irrecoverable.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Salaries and Wages

In examining the Council's payroll function, our objective is to confirm that extant employment legislation is being adhered to, that the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are satisfied regarding the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, and that pension scheme requirements are met.

The Council uses the SAGE system to process payroll. Payments are made directly through the Council's bank account, via direct debit. To meet our audit objective, we undertook the following audit work:

- We agreed the gross amounts paid to all individuals in August 2025, by reference to the Council's approved pay points on the NJC annual schedule of rates payable.
- We checked to ensure that tax and National Insurance deductions have been made applying the appropriate tax code and NI Table, also ensuring that appropriate amounts are paid over to HMRC regularly each month.
- We confirmed that appropriate employee and employer contributions to the pension schemes have been determined and paid over to either the Essex Pension Fund, or NEST, as appropriate.
- We verified the net payments due to staff from their copy payslips to the bank transfers for the same sample month.

The national Local Government Services pay agreement for 2025-26, which was applicable from 1st April 2025, was agreed at the start of August 2025. The revised pay scales were applied when making the August salary payments which also included the back-pay due from 1st April 2025. We confirmed the accuracy of the calculation of each employee's back-pay and that it had been included correctly with their August salary payment.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Petty Cash

As part of the internal audit review and the reporting requirements in the AGAR, we are required to assess the effectiveness of controls over any petty cash accounts in use, ensuring that payments are appropriately supported, that transactions are only made for items connected with the Council's functions and that any recoverable VAT is correctly identified.

At our interim audits, we confirmed that the petty cash is being reconciled on a regular basis. We checked and agreed the cash balance held to the petty cash ledger at the date of each visit and confirmed that there was appropriate supporting documentation for all petty cash payments made since the date of the last reconciliations.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Asset Register

Councils are required to maintain an Asset & Investment Register and to report the overall value of fixed assets and long-term investments held in the AGAR (Section 2, Box 9). Whilst the "Practitioners' Guide" does not specify a particular basis of accounting for fixed assets, it stresses that the approach taken from year to year should be consistent and that the value of individual assets held should not normally change from one year to another - with the only changes being the inclusion of new assets purchased or removal of assets disposed of. In most

cases, assets are recorded at their purchase cost, or at a suitable proxy where that value is not known. However, assets gifted at nil cost or other assets held with no intrinsic value (often referred to as community assets) are normally included at a nominal £1.

Each year, the Council undertakes a review of its asset register just prior to the year-end, to confirm that all changes have been identified. The updated register for 2025-26 will be reported to the Council meeting in March 2026.

Conclusion

We have not undertaken any audit work in relation to the Asset Register at this stage. We will review the revised asset register at our final audit visit, to confirm that the total value of assets owned by the Council is reported correctly in the AGAR.

Investments and Loans

Our objective is to confirm that an appropriate investment strategy is in place, that any funds not required for immediate use, whether temporarily or on a longer-term basis, are invested in line with that strategy and that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records. We also confirm that any loan repayments due to, or payable by, the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

We have confirmed that:

- At present, the Council does not have any long-term investments (i.e., investments of over 1 year). As noted earlier in the report, the majority of the Council's funds are held in instant access accounts, with about a third currently held in a Nationwide 95-day Saver account.
- As required by the 'Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments', the Council has an Investment Strategy and Policy in place. This was last reviewed by the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee in October 2024 and approved by the Council on 12th November 2024. We note that, unless there are any legislative changes requiring amendment, the current Investment Strategy and Policy will not be subject to further review until October 2027.
- At the start of the financial year, the Council had two outstanding loans from the Public Works Loan Board. We confirmed that the final instalment on the final outstanding loan relating to work at Epping Hall was made in May 2025. The only loan remaining relates to the Market Store Building and the loan period runs until 2036.

At our first interim audit, we confirmed that the payments of principal and interest made in May 2025 agreed to the third party "demand" notice from the UK Debt Management Office. During our subsequent audit visit, we confirmed that the second half yearly payment had been made correctly for the one remaining loan.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising to date that require a formal comment or recommendation. At our final audit visit, we will confirm that there is accurate disclosure of the remaining loan balance and payments in the year in Section 2 of the AGAR.

ATTACHMENT M

Assertion 10: DIGITAL AND DATA COMPLIANCE AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

There are four elements to the new Assertion 10 requirements. Councils must be able to confirm compliance in all four areas.

As digital behaviour becomes ever more prevalent, so are the requirements for its safe use, particularly for respected data controllers. Having looked at some of the on costs that could occur as a result of failure in this area, the Town Clerk would recommend that Epping Town Council undertake whatever is required to maximise data security and budget accordingly, as it is money well spent.

Data leaks, lost communications, regulatory failures and cybersecurity threats

1) Emails:

New email and domain name requirements

Assertion 10 states that all smaller authorities, by AGAR 2025.26 must have:

- A council-owned domain based official email address
 - Council must have a Council owned domain name
 - Gov.uk = preferred as most secure
 - Epping Town Council already have a gov.uk domain
 - Clerk's email will be changed to: townclerk@eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk
 - Cllrs will all be allocated an Epping Town Council email address
- Eg: cllrjanetwhitehouse@eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk
- This must be used for ETC business only and for the attention of that councillors only
 - These email accounts will be subject to FOI and SAR
 - All communication from ETC staff will come to these new email addresses
 - Cost for 12 councillors: £78 per month

This is best practice. Failure to adhere exposes Council to a potential data risk

Domain name should be owned by Epping Town Council

ACTIONS:

- Clerk's new email has been set up
- Councillors new Epping Town Council email addresses will be set up
- Epping Town Council's domain name is owned by Epping Town Council

2) Website accessibility

Assertion 10 states that all smaller authorities, by AGAR 2025.26 must have:

- A website that continues to meet accessibility regulations

- Ensure Epping Town Council's website compliance with the new WCAG2.2AA rules (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA rules)
- Epping Town Council's website is provided by Vision
- An accessibility statement of compliance was published in 2021 when Vision created the website and this confirmed compliance with the previous rules
- Anything created and loaded onto the website from now on needs to be compliant with the new Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA rules
- A professional, independent website accessibility health check has been undertaken
- They have advised the website is WCAG 2.2AA compliant. This will be further analysed and augmented

ACTIONS:

- New accessibility statement to be drafted by the Town Clerk after checking the website's accessibility to confirm compliance and ensuring maximum compliancy

3) IT Policy

Assertion 10 states that all smaller authorities, by AGAR 2025.26 must have:

- An IT policy
- Covering authority owned and personal equipment
- Conduct with emails, social media, etc

FOR COUNCIL'S APPROVAL:

- Up-to-date IT Policy drafted by the Town Clerk using model principles for Council's approval (**ATTACHMENT M1**)

4) GDPR and data protection responsibilities

Assertion 10 states that all smaller authorities, by AGAR 2025.26 must have:

- A reinforcement of compliance with GDPR and DPA 2018 responsibilities (**GDPR 2016 and Data Protection Act 2018**)
- Council's Data Protection policy is reviewed regularly and was last reviewed and approved in March 2025
- Council's Compliance Failure Policy is reviewed alongside the Data Protection policy and was last reviewed and approved in March 2025

Policies in place:

Data Protection Policy, Compliance Failure Policy, Freedom of Information Policy, Privacy Statements

FOR COUNCIL'S APPROVAL:

- Document Retention Policy drafted for Council's approval (**Attachment M2**)

ACTIONS:

- Data collection roadmap exercise to be undertaken

RECOMMENDATION 1: All Epping Town Councillors should have .gov.uk email addresses

RECOMMENDATION 2: The draft IT policy should be APPROVED as the IT policy for Epping Town Council (**Attachment M1**)

RECOMMENDATION 3: The draft Data Retention Policy should be APPROVED as the Data Retention policy for Epping Town Council (**Attachment M2**)

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Town Clerk should work on Epping Town Council's website to ensure optimum accessibility

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

Information Technology (IT) Policy

Purpose of our IT Policy

The purpose of Epping Town Council's IT policy is to establish clear parameters for how councillors, staff, and other authorised users use council-provided technology or equipment in the course of their duties.

It has been designed to set expectations for appropriate use of equipment and systems and it aims to do the following:

- Raise awareness of risks associated with IT use
- Safeguard the council's data and digital assets
- Clarify what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable use
- Outline the consequences of policy breaches

Monitoring of IT Use

As an IT provider, Epping Town Council has the right to monitor the use of its IT equipment and systems, provided there is a legitimate reason for doing so and councillors, employees and other authorised users are informed that such monitoring may take place in a proportionate way, complying with relevant data protection and privacy laws.

Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all councillors, staff, and other authorised users, regardless of their working location or pattern, including those who are home-based, office-based, or work on a flexible or part-time basis. It sets out the expectations for the appropriate use of IT equipment and systems provided by the council.

Contact details:

Council's IT Provider = **RAD group**. Email: support@rad-group.co.uk

Cyber Insurance = Optimum Speciality Risks, Clear Insurance Management Ltd

Email: councils@thecleargroup.com

Computer use

1. Hardware

- a) Epping Town Council's computer equipment is provided for council purposes, however reasonable personal use is permitted outside of working hours (reasonable interpreted as in the opinion of the Town Clerk). Any personal use of our computers and systems should not interrupt our daily council work in any way. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are asked to restrict any personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours.
- b) Locking computers when leaving desk, all councillors, staff, and other authorised users must lock their computers when leaving their desks to prevent unauthorised access. This applies to all council and personal devices used for work.
- c) Screens should not be left unattended with work open on them when the user is away from their machines.

- d) All computer and other electronic equipment supplied should be treated with good care at all times. Computer equipment is expensive, and any damage sustained to any equipment will have a financial impact on the council.
- e) Computer and electronic hardware should be kept clean, and every precaution taken to prevent food and drink being dropped or spilled onto it.
- f) All computer and mobile equipment will carry a number which is logged against the current owner of that equipment. A database of equipment issued will be kept.
- g) Equipment should not be dismantled or reassembled without seeking advice.
- h) Councillors, staff, and other authorised are not to purchase any computer or mobile equipment (including software) unless previously authorised by the Town Clerk or Council.
- i) Personal disks, USB stick, CDs, DVDs, data storage devices etc cannot be used on council computers without the prior approval of the Town Clerk.
- j) The council has wireless networks. Using a portable device to make personal Wi-Fi hot spots which bypass existing WiFi is not allowed.
- k) Any faults or necessary repairs must be reported to Council's IT provider RAD group.

2. Portable equipment

- a) Portable equipment includes laptop computers, netbooks, tablets, mobile and smart phones with email capability and access to the internet, etc.
- b) It is particularly emphasised that council back-up procedures specific to portable equipment should be followed at all times.
- c) All portable computers must be stored safely and securely when not in use in the office, i.e. when travelling or when working from home. Portable equipment (unless locked in a secure cabinet or office) should be kept with or near the user at all times; should not be left unattended when away from council premises and should never be left in parked vehicles or at any council or non-council premises, other than the officer's home and locked/stored securely where it cannot be accessed by others.
- d) It is important to ensure all portable devices are protected with encryption in case they are lost or stolen. All smartphones or tablets that hold council data, including emails and files, must be protected with a pin code. Where possible, these devices should also be programmed to erase all content after several unsuccessful attempts to break in. Any security set on these devices must not be disabled or removed.
- e) Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is a security process that requires users to verify their identity using two or more independent methods—for example, entering a password (something you know) and confirming a code sent to your mobile device (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and sensitive data. NALC recommends implementing MFA as a best practice to enhance information security and support compliance with data protection obligations under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Epping Town Council has Multi Factor Authentication enabled.
- f) If an item of portable equipment is lost or damaged this should be reported to Council's IT provider and the Town Clerk. If the loss or damage is due to an act of

negligence, the individual responsible may be liable to meet an agreed sum towards the loss/damage, dependant on the insurance cover protection.

- g) To protect confidential information, unless it is a requirement of the job and this has been authorised, it is forbidden for photographs or videos to be taken inside council premises where data is stored, without the prior written permission of the Town Clerk. This includes mobile telephones with camera function, camcorder, tape or other recording device for sound or pictures moving or still.
- h) Under no circumstances should any non public meeting or conversation be recorded without the permission of those present. This does not affect statutory rights (under The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014).
- i) In addition, the council does not permit webcams (which may be pre-installed on many laptops) to be used in the workplace, other than for conference calls for council purposes. If there is any doubt as to whether a device falls under this clause, advice should be sought from the Town Clerk.

3. Use of own devices

- a) Personal laptops and other computers or other devices should not be brought into work and used to access council IT systems, unless this has been authorised by the Town Clerk. This is to ensure that no viruses enter the system and to assist in maintaining security, confidentiality and data protection.
- b) Personal devices can be used on site outside of working hours and not to access Council's IT systems. The only exception is to access email accounts using multi factor authentication and these must be logged out after use.
- c) The same security precautions apply to personal devices as to the council's desktop equipment. For continuity purposes, calls made to external parties (such as eg "external stakeholders") should be made on council landlines or mobile phone numbers to ensure that only these numbers are used and/or stored by the recipient, rather than personal numbers where possible. Any emails sent from own devices should be sent from a council email account and should not identify the individual's personal email address. Any calls that are made from personal mobiles should be set to No Caller ID. Calls between officers are permitted.
- d) Councillors, staff, and other authorised persons that use council systems are expected to use all devices in an ethical and respectful manner and in accordance with this policy. Accessing inappropriate websites or services on any device via the IT infrastructure that is paid for or provided by the council carries a high degree of risk, and, for employees, may result in extreme disciplinary action. For Workers or Contractors, we may terminate the worker agreement. This is irrespective of the ownership of the device used. An example would be downloading copyright music illegally or accessing pornographic material.
- e) In cases of legal proceedings against the council or e.g. "external stakeholders", the council may need to temporarily take possession of a device, whether council-owned or personal to retrieve the relevant data.
- f) When using digital profiles, work profiles must always be used for work-related purposes.

(g) Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who intend to use their own devices via the council's infrastructure must ensure that they:

- use a "6-digit pin, strong password (ie one which uses three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver) or finger print (preferably the latter) to protect their device(s) from being accessed. For smartphones and tablets this should lock the device after 3 of failed login attempts;
- configure their device(s) to automatically prompt for a password after a period of inactivity of more than 3 minutes;
- always password protect any documents containing confidential information that are sent as attachments to an email, and notify the password separately (preferably by a means other than email);
- for smartphones and tablets, activate the automatic device wipe function (where available). Note that use of the remote wipe function may also involve the removal of the individual's personal data. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are therefore advised to keep personal data separate from council data where possible;
- ensure secure WiFi networks are used;
- ensure that work-related data cannot be viewed or retrieved by family or friends.
- inform Epping Town Council's IT provider (RAD) and the Town Clerk if their device(s) is/are lost, stolen, or inappropriately accessed where there is risk of access to council data or resources. To prevent phones being used, they will need to retain the details of their IMEI number and the SIM number of the device as their provider will require this to deactivate it.

(h) Personal data relating to councillors, staff, and other authorised users, associates, residents, external stakeholders should not be saved to any personal accounts with third-party storage cloud service providers as this may breach data protection legislation or create a security risk if the device is lost or stolen.

(i) Personal information and sensitive data should never be saved on councillors, staff, or other authorised users own devices as this may breach confidentiality agreements, especially if the device is used by other people from time to time.

j) If removable media are used to transfer data (e.g. USB drives or CDs with the Town Clerk's permission), the user must also securely delete the data on the media once the transfer is complete.

(k) Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who open any attachments should ensure that any cached copies are deleted immediately after use. Epping Town Council's IT provider, RAD group will provide assistance or training in doing this if needed. Additional risks include data belonging to the council being accessed by unauthorised persons if the device(s) is lost, stolen, or used without the owner's permission.

(l) Any work done on user's own equipment should be stored securely and password protected and should always be backed up in accordance with the council's standard backup procedures.

(m) Prior to the disposal of any device that has work data stored on it, and in the event of a user leaving the council, councillors, staff, and other authorised users are required to allow Epping Town Council's IT provider (RAD group) access to the device to ensure that all passwords, user access shortcuts and any identifiable data are removed from the device.

(n) Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must take responsibility for understanding how their device(s) work in respect to the above rules if they are accessing council servers/services via their own IT equipment. Risks to the user's personal device(s) include data loss as a result of a crash of the operating system, bugs and viruses, software or hardware failures and programming errors rendering a device inoperable. The council will use reasonable endeavours to assist, but councillors, staff, and other authorised users are personally liable for their own device(s) and for any costs incurred as a result of the above.

4. Health and safety

- (a) Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work in council offices will be provided with an appropriate workstation.
- (b) The council has a duty to ensure that regular appropriate eye tests, carried out by a competent person, are offered to employees using display screen equipment. Further details are available from the Town Clerk.
- (c) Any VDU user who feels that their workstation requires changes to make it compliant must speak to the Town Clerk and Epping Town Council's IT provider (RAD group).
- (d) If any hazards are detected at a workstation, including 'noises' from the IT equipment, this should be reported immediately to Epping Town Council's IT provider and the Town Clerk.

5. Password and Authentication Policy

- a) All user accounts must be protected by strong, secure passwords. Epping Town Council follows the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) recommendations for creating passwords using three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver). This method helps create passwords that are both strong and easy to remember, while offering effective protection against common cyber threats such as brute-force attacks.
- b) In addition to strong passwords, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) should be enabled wherever possible. MFA requires users to provide two or more independent forms of verification—for example, a password (something you know) and a code sent to your phone (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and personal data.

To further strengthen account security:

- c) Initial user account passwords must be generated by the IT provider.
- (d) Default passwords provided by vendors or the IT provider must be changed immediately upon installation or setup.
- e) Service or System (e.g. Website) account passwords are generated and managed by the IT provider.
- (f) The council recommends these practices as part of its commitment to robust information security and to support compliance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

g) Access to Passwords

- Passwords are personal and must not be shared under any circumstances.
- Only the assigned user of an account may access or use the associated password.

- In exceptional cases (e.g., incident response or employee offboarding), access to system credentials may be granted to authorised personnel from the IT provider with appropriate approvals and logging.
 - Epping Town Council's IT provider (RAD group) will store Council's passwords safely, electronically on Council's behalf
- h) Passwords must not be stored in plain text or written down in insecure locations
 - i) Immediately change password if compromise is suspected.
 - k) All access to administrative or shared credentials must be logged and auditable. (This is done by Council's IT provider.)
 - l) Attempts to access unauthorized passwords will be treated as a security incident.
 - m) Users are responsible for creating and maintaining secure passwords for their accounts.
 - n) The IT security provider is responsible for:
 - Managing system/service credentials.
 - Enforcing password policies. Auditing and monitoring password-related security practices.

6. Monitoring

- a) The council reserves the right to monitor and maintain logs of computer usage and inspect any files stored on its network, servers, computers, or associated technology to ensure compliance with this policy as well as relevant legislation if required. Internet, email, and computer usage is continually monitored as part of the council's protection against computer viruses, ongoing maintenance of the system, and when investigating faults.
- b) The council will monitor the use of electronic communications and use of the internet in line with the Investigatory Powers (Interception by Councils etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018 if required.
- c) The council will monitor the use of electronic communications and use of the internet in line with the Investigatory Powers (Interception by Councils etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018.
- d) The information gathered through monitoring will be retained only long enough for any breach of this policy to come to light and for any investigation to be conducted.
- e) Councillors, staff, and other authorised users have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in the council's data protection policy.
- f) The council reserves the right to inspect all files stored on its computer systems in order to assure compliance with this policy. The council also reserves the right to monitor the types of sites being accessed and the extent and frequency of use of the internet at any time, to ensure that the system is not being abused and to protect the council from potential damage or disrepute.
- g) Any use that the council considers to be 'improper', either in terms of the content or the amount of time spent on this, may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- h) All computers will be periodically checked and scanned for unauthorised programmes and viruses.

7. Remote working

a) Increased IT security measures apply to those who work away from their normal place of work (e.g. whilst travelling, working from home or at an alternative premises or any other different venue), as follows:

- if logging into the council's systems or services remotely, using computers that either do not belong to the council or are not owned by the user, any passwords must not be saved, and the user must log out at the end of the session deleting all logs and history records within the browser used. If the configuration of the device does not clearly support these actions (for example at an internet café), council services should not be accessed from that device;
- the location and direction of the screen should be checked to ensure confidential information is out of view. Steps should be taken to avoid messages being read by other people, including other travellers on public transport etc;
- any data printed should be collected and stored securely;
- all electronic files should be password protected and the data saved to the council's system/services when accessible;
- papers, files or computer equipment must not be left unattended at any premises unless arrangements have been made with a responsible person at an alternative Council premises for them to be kept in a locked room or cabinet if they are to be left unattended at any time;
- any data should be kept safely and should only be disposed of securely;
- papers, files, data sticks/storage, flash drive or backup hard drives should not be left unattended in cars, except where it is entirely unavoidable for short periods, in which case they must be locked in the boot of the car. If staying away overnight, council data should be taken into the accommodation, care being taken that it will not be interfered with by others or inadvertently destroyed;
- where possible the ability to remotely wipe any mobile devices that process sensitive information should be retained in the case of loss or theft;
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work away from the office with sensitive data may be equipped with a screen privacy filter for mobile devices and should use this at all times when accessing such data away from the office.

8. Email

(a) Council email facilities are intended to promote effective and speedy communication on work-related matters. Although we encourage the use of email, it can be risky. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users need to be careful not to introduce viruses onto council systems and should take proper account of the security advice below.

b) On occasion, it will be quicker to action an issue by telephone or face to face, rather than via protracted email chains. Emails should not be used as a substitute for face to face or telephone conversations. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are expected to decide which is the optimum channel of communication to complete their tasks quickly and effectively.

c) These rules are designed to minimise the legal risks run when using email at work and to guide councillors, staff, and other authorised users as to what may and may not be done. If there is something which is not covered in the policy, councillors, staff, and other authorised users should ask Epping Town Council's IT provider, rather than assuming they know the right answer.

d) All councillors, staff, and other authorised users who need to use email as part of their role will normally be given their own council email address and account. The council may, at any time, withdraw email access, should it feel that this is no longer necessary for the role or that the system is being abused.

e) Email messages sent on the council's account are for council use only. Personal use is not permitted.

9. Use of the Internet

Copyright

a) Much of what appears on the Internet is protected by copyright. Any copying without permission, including electronic copying, is illegal and therefore prohibited. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 set out the rules. The copyright laws not only apply to documents but also to software. The infringement of the copyright of another person or organisation could lead to legal action being taken against the council and damages being awarded, as well as disciplinary action.

b) The council's policy is to comply with copyright laws, and not to bend the rules in any way. c) Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should not assume that because a document or file is on the Internet, it can be freely copied. There is a difference between information in the 'public domain' (which is no longer confidential or secret information but is still copyright protected) and information which is not protected by copyright (such as where the author has been dead for more than 70 years).

d) Usually, a website will contain copyright conditions; these warnings should be read before downloading or copying.

e) Copyright and database right law can be complicated. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should check with Council's IT provider (RAD) if unsure about anything.

Trademarks, links and data protection

a. The council does not permit the registration of any new domain names or trademarks relating to the council's names or products anywhere in the world, unless authorised to do so. Nor should they add links from any of the council's web pages to any other external sites without checking first with Council's IT provider.

b. Special rules apply to the processing of personal and sensitive personal data. For further guidance on this, see the council's data protection policy, a copy of which is available on Council's website and from the Town Clerk.

Accuracy of information

One of the main benefits of the internet is the access it gives to large amounts of information, which is often more up to date than traditional sources such as libraries. Be aware that, as the internet is uncontrolled, much of the information may be less accurate than it appears.

10. Use of social media

a. Social media includes blogs; Wikipedia and other similar sites where text can be posted; multimedia or user generated media sites (YouTube); social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, etc.); virtual worlds (Second Life); text messaging and mobile device communications and more traditional forms

of media such as TV and newspapers. Care should be taken when using social media at any time, either using council systems or at home.

b. Personal use of social networking/media and chat sites should be restricted to breaks during working hours, or after hours with permission and not on Council's IT equipment without prior permission from the Town Clerk.

c. Inappropriate comments and postings can adversely affect the reputation of the council, even if it is not directly referenced. If comments or photographs could reasonably be interpreted as being associated with the council, or if remarks about external stakeholders could be regarded as abusive, humiliating, sexual harassment, discriminatory or derogatory, or could constitute bullying or harassment, the council will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should be aware that parishioners or other local organisations may read councillors, staff, and other authorised users' personal weblogs, to acquire information, for example, about their work, internal council business, and employee morale. Therefore, even if the council is not named, care should be taken with any views expressed.

d. To protect both the council and its interests, everyone is required to comply with the following rules about social media, whether in relation to their council role or personal social networking sites, and irrespective of whether this is during or after working hours:

e. Any blog that mentions the council should identify the author as one of its councillors or employees and state that the views expressed on the blog or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of the Council. Even if the council is not mentioned, care should be taken with any views expressed on social media sites and any views should clearly be stated to be the writer's own (e.g. via a disclaimer statement such as: "The comments and other content on this site are my own and do not represent the positions or opinions of my employer/ the council.") Writers must not claim or give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the council.

f. The council expects councillors, staff, and other authorised users to be respectful about the council and its current or potential staff, including employees, councillors, clerks, and authorised users and not to engage in any name calling or any behaviour that will reflect negatively on its reputation. Any unauthorised use of copyright materials, any unfounded or derogatory statements, or any misrepresentation is not viewed favourably and could constitute gross misconduct.

g. Photos or videos that include employees or other workers wearing uniforms or clothing displaying the council's name or logo should not be posted on social media. Additionally, photos, videos, or audio recordings must not be taken on council premises without explicit permission.

h. Comments posted by councillors, staff, and other authorised users on any sites should be knowledgeable, accurate and professional and should not compromise the council in any way.

i. Inappropriate conversations with external stakeholders should not take place on any social networking sites, including forums.

j. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must be aware that they are personally liable for anything that they write or present online (including on an online forum or blog, post, feed or website). Councillors should always be mindful of the Members Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for comments, content, or images that are defamatory, embarrassing, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They may also be sued by other organisations, and any individual or council that views their comments, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, other councillors, staff, and other authorised users can raise grievances for alleged bullying and/or harassment.

k. Postings to websites or anywhere on the internet and social media of any kind, or in any press or media of any kind, should not breach copyright or other law or disclose confidential information, defame or make derogatory comments about the council or its councillors, staff, and other authorised users, or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach data protection legislation.

l. Contacts by the media relating to the council, should be referred to the Town Clerk only, in accordance with Epping Town Council's media policy.

m. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook must ensure that the information on their profile is accurate and up to date and must update their profile on leaving the council.

n. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who have left the council must not post any inappropriate comments about the council or its councillors, staff, and other authorised users on LinkedIn, Facebook, X.com or any other social media/networking sites.

o. During your employment/ involvement with the council, you may create or obtain access to a variety of professional contacts and confidential information. All such contacts will be considered council property and may be subject to disclosure upon request.

p. Council may, from time to time, monitor external postings on social media sites. Any employee who has a profile (for example on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with the council. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are also advised that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air council concerns or complaints: these should be raised with the council or formally through the grievance procedure.

q. It is important to note that external stakeholders' contact details and information remain the property of the council. In addition, councillors, staff, and other authorised users leaving the council will be required to delete all council-related data including external stakeholders contact details from any personal device/equipment.

r. Misuse of IT systems and equipment is not in line with the council's standards of conduct and will be taken seriously. Any inappropriate or unauthorised use may lead to formal action, including disciplinary proceedings or, in serious cases, dismissal.

11. Data retention

Epping Town Council's Data Retention policy covers the Council's periods of data retention.

12. Website accessibility

Epping Town Council's website will be checked regularly to ensure it meets the most up-to-date website accessibility requirements and standards.

13. Cybersecurity basics

Epping Town Council carries Cyber insurance.

Draft V1: February 2026

ATTACHMENT M2

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

Data retention policy

Epping Town Council's Data Retention Policy outlines how we retain, manage and dispose of data in accordance with our legal obligations. The Council recognises its duty to maintain accurate records, ensure transparency and protect personal data.

This policy applies to all records and data held or processed by Epping Town Council, including emails through official.gov.uk addresses, financial records, minutes and agendas and data processed for statutory and service delivery purposes.

The policy adheres to the following legal and regulatory obligations:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
- The Local Government Transparency Code 2015
- Proper Practice in Governance (JPAG Practitioners' Guide)
- NALC and SLCC guidelines
- Statutory retention periods under legislation such as the Limitation Act 1980, Audit Regulations and HMRC rules

Personal data is kept for no longer than necessary for the purposes for which it is processed (Article 5 (1) € UK GDPR)

- Some data is subject to statutory retention periods which override discretionary timescales
- Retention periods may be adjusted providing they do not breach statutory rules. This will be operationally, legally or risk considered and adjusted by an amendment to the Data Retention Policy through Council

- Data should be checked annually to adhere to the policy and deleted or archived accordingly and securely

- Disposal should be secure (digital shredding or secure deletion software/methods)

- Councillors should take particular care with the information they hold which is also subject to Council's security policies

- All official .gov.uk email address should be used for Epping Town Council business only and not shared. These will be owned by Epping Town Council and subject to Data Protection, FOI and SAR requirements

- Councillors must ensure their devices have adequate password and security protection

- Epping Town Council upholds the rights of individuals under GDPR including: their right to access their personal data, their right to rectification, their right to erasure (subject to legal exceptions) and it being up to date

- This policy will be reviewed at the start of each new Council or more frequently if legislation or guidance changes

**Retention of documents required for the audit of town and parish councils
(Summary Schedule)**

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason	
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive	
Scales of fees and charges	Six years	Management	
Receipt and payment account(s)	Indefinite	Archive	
Receipt books of all kinds	Six years	VAT	
Bank statements, including deposit/savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit	
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit	
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	
Quotations and tenders	Six years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	
Paid invoices	Six years	VAT	
Paid cheques	Six years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	
VAT records	Six years generally but 20	VAT	

	years for VAT on rents		
Petty cash, postage, and telephone books	Six years	Tax, VAT, and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	
Timesheets	Three years (or last completed audit year)	Audit (requirement) and personal injury (best practice)	
Wages books	Twelve years	Superannuation	
Insurance policies	As long as a claim can be made under it	Management and legal proceedings Personal injury (best practice) The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance Regulations 1998 (SI.2753)	
Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	Indefinitely	Future claims	
Investments	Indefinite	Audit and management	
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit and management	
Members allowances register	Six years	Tax and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	

Magazine	Indefinite 2 copies	Historical	
External publications	1 year or as long as useful	Management	
HR			
Timesheets	3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal injury (best practice)	
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation	
Employee records	6 years from date of leaving	Management	
Pensions	100 years from Dob	Management	
For halls, centre, and recreation grounds:			
Application to hire lettings diaries copies of bills to hires record of tickets issue	Six years Regular hires for the lifetime of the hire + 6 years	VAT management	
For allotments:			
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit and management	
Parish amenities			
Inspection reports	Lifetime of asset + 3 years	Management, Personal Injury	

Playgrounds and recreational facilities			
Inspection reports	Indefinite	Management, Personal injury	
Planning			
Applications	Accessed electronically from EFDC's website	N/A	
EFD Local Plan – consultation and background documents	Lifetime of policy	Management	
Policies	Lifetime of policy	Management	
General			
Correspondence	1 year	Management	
External policies	Lifetime of policy	Management	
Consultations	1 year after consultation completed	Management	
For burial grounds:			
Register of fees collected, register of burials, register of purchased graves, register/plan of grave spaces, register of memorials, applications for	Indefinite	Archives and Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI. 204)	

interment, applications for right to erect memorials, disposal certificates, and copy certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial.			
Legal documents			
Contracts	6 years (If in doubt 12 years)	All tenancies and leases are contracts	
Leases	12 years	If arrears are due under a lease	
Rent	6 years (If in doubt 12 years)	If arrears due under a tenancy and not a lease	
Trust deeds and similar	Indefinite	Indefinite	

Legislation: Code of Practice on the Management of Records issued under section 46 the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Approved: March 2026. Date for review: October 2027

Epping Town Council 2026

ATTACHMENT N

Grant applications

Epping Town Council

Application for Grant Aid 2025/26

Name of Organisation Youth Employment Strategy (YES) Partnership	
Name of Contact person Sarah Bennett	
Mailing Address	
Aims of Organisation (as stated in constitution) The advancement of education for the public benefit by supporting the work of education establishments and job centres (DWP), and organisations associated with them, by providing life skills training to improve the employability of young people in South East England.	
Registered Charity Yes	No:1175126.....
*Income of Organisation in last Financial year? (Please state main sources of income)	£...14300.....
Grants	
*Expenditure of Organisation in last financial year? (Please state main items of expenditure)	£18500.....
How much grant are you applying for? £2000	
What is the grant required for? To cover the cost of one YES conference for students attending from Epping St John's senior school	
Other Grant providers approached? Were these applications successful? Loughton Town Council - yes	
What benefits will the grant provide for <u>the people of Epping</u> and which sections of the community will benefit? Children in year 9 and 10 in senior school in Epping will be benefiting from the program, we hold two conferences that they attend (circa 30 children each time) and we also hold mentoring in the senior schools in year 11 to help with passing GCSEs and choosing A levels.	

*Brief notes to be entered here. You should attach your last financial statement.
Balance. £11,047.

Cllr C McCredie notified us about funding - as Major of Epping she attended all of the conferences in 2025 where Epping St John was present and saw first hand the benefits to the children in Epping District.

Epping Town Council

Application for Grant Aid 2025/26

Name of Organisation – Friends of Epping Primary school	
Name of Contact person – Louise Warren	
Mailing Address Epping Primary School	
Aims of Organisation (as stated in constitution) Raises money to help provide equipment and resources for Epping Primary School to advance the education of the pupils in the school.	
Registered Charity Yes - 1074487	No:
*Income of Organisation in last Financial year? £27097 (Please state main sources of income) Fundraising events put on to raise funds throughout the academic year	
*Expenditure of Organisation in last financial year? £34147 (Please state main items of expenditure) KS1 and EYFS playground Little Wandle books 2 johns workshop New paved area	
How much grant are you applying for? £1500	
What is the grant required for? At Epping Primary school we want to have a place where children can be immersed in sensory items and music. We want to build a place where children can express themselves through creative arts and music. This area will have percussion instruments where children can explore how music makes them feel and express themselves without using words. They can create performances for their friends and class too. This area would bring something new to the school as we don't have our own music instruments or a space like this. This would be a great outlet for children who are struggling with their attention in class or help to boost their mental health with creative expression.	
Other Grant providers approached? Were these applications successful? Morrisons grant -£1000k to go towards this already secured Tesco's blue token - £1500k secured We have a current large bank account balance but £16978 is reserved for the ks2 playground we are installing and the other funds are going towards my health matter PSHE scheme and online safety talks	
What benefits will the grant provide for <u>the people of Epping</u> and which sections of the community will benefit	

*Brief notes to be entered here. You should attach your last financial statement.
Town Clerk received. Balance £21,679.83

ATTACHMENT O

Christmas Market: Saturday 6th December 2025 Summary

Opening times for this year were 12noon to 7pm, it is felt it would be better to open from 11am until 6pm. There were lots of people on the high street earlier trying to buy from stall holders that had not finished setting up. From 6pm-7pm the footfall had dropped off considerably and most traders had either sold out or had already started to pack up.

Please note: the market takes a lot of organisation and traders need a certain amount of trading hours to make it worthwhile. 6pm max.

The entertainment worked well, but it would have been better to have had extra speakers further along the high street so all PA announcements could be heard fully.

This will be factored in with Fores Radio who can provide this.

More barriers could be placed earlier within the parking bays to be occupied by traders, to stop members of the public parking and prohibiting the set-up of the stall, even with road closure and no parking signs in place.

Please note: the later the stalls are set up, the more likely the spaces will be filled.

The first Saturday of December seems to be a popular date for surrounding areas to hold Christmas markets, so it might be worth either looking at other dates or reverting back to the Friday for this event.

Items to discuss:

Confirm date and time: Saturday 5th December 2025, 11am to 6pm or another day?

Stall mix/type: Suggestions

Entertainment ideas: Suggestions

LV 3 – Art and Culture Prize

Object

To award an individual or group of individuals who have significantly added to the artistic or cultural environment of the Epping area. This is a broad area and may involve art, music, architecture, horticulture or any form of cultural endeavour.

The prize is designed to highlight and promote the artistic and cultural credentials of the Epping area.

Award

Annual and will be presented at the Mayor's end of term dinner.

Nomination

Any resident or councillor may nominate, but the proposed recipient must reside in or work in or display their work primarily in the Epping area. Any nominations will be considered by the Town Council and the award winner chosen by the Town Council.

Nominations can be made online to the Town Council by way of email

The existence of the award will be publicised by the Town Council.

Cllr N Avey