



EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

EPPING HALL, ST JOHNS RD, EPPING, ESSEX CM16 5JU

Tel: 01992 579444 Fax: 01992 579446 e-mail: info@eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk

TO THE TOWN MAYOR and ALL MEMBERS of EPPING TOWN COUNCIL:

You are hereby summoned to attend an **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **Epping Town Council** which is to be held in the **Conference Room, Epping Hall, St Johns Road, Epping** on **Tuesday, 11th June 2024** at **8pm** in order to transact the following business:

Beverley Rumsey
Town Clerk
5th June 2024

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies and reasons for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests, along with the nature of those interests, in relation to any item on this agenda.

Cllr L Burrows, Cllr R Sharif, Cllr H Whitbread, Cllr Janet Whitehouse & Cllr Jon Whitehouse declare a non-pecuniary interest in any items that relate to Epping Forest District Council as they are also District Councillors.

Cllr H Whitbread declares a non-pecuniary interest in items that relate to Essex County Council as she is a County Councillor.

3 DISPENSATIONS

To receive requests for dispensations from members concerning any item of business on this agenda.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME

The Mayor will invite public comments and responses in relation to items on this agenda. *Individuals will be permitted a maximum of three minutes each (total time for this session is limited to ten minutes).*

5 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 9th May 2024. **(Attachment A)**

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 14th May 2024. **(Attachment B)**

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the ExtraOrdinary Council Meeting held on 28th May 2024. **(Attachment C)**

6 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

To receive the signed Minutes of the following Committee meetings and to adopt any recommendations within the Minutes not previously adopted:

Planning & General Purposes Committee	14 th May 2024	(Attachment D)
Planning & General Purposes Committee	28 th May 2024	(Attachment E)

7 COMMUNICATIONS TO NOTE/REQUIRING DECISION

(i) Stonards Hill recreation ground car park neighbour requests **(Attachment F)**

The Town Clerk has received a request from a resident representing the neighbours opposite Stonards Hill recreation ground, as per **Attachment F**.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **DECIDE** what to do.

(ii) Epping Town Council's 50th anniversary

Former Town Mayor, Alan Smith contacted the Town Clerk regarding the establishment of Epping Town Council in 1973/1974 and the consequent 50th anniversary.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **DECIDE** whether to formally mark this occasion and if so, how.

(iii) Staff thank you

The Town Clerk has received a card from our groundsman Martin Patience, thanking Council and colleagues for his gifts and farewell.

Council is requested to **NOTE** this information.

(iv) Former Mayor's charity donations

At the Civic Reception on Friday 26th April 2024, Former Town Mayor, Cllr Christine Burgess held a raffle and auction to raise money for her chosen charities, Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) and Marie Curie.

Cllr Burgess would like to thank all those who supported her with this and is delighted to announce that £2240 was raised, which will be split equally between the two charities.

Council is requested to **NOTE** this information.

8 TOWN MAYOR'S & DEPUTY MAYOR'S DUTIES **(Attachment G)**

Council to receive the duties undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor since 14th May 2024.

9 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

To receive reports, if any, from Members on meetings or visits made since the Annual Council Meeting on 14th May 2024.

10 REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS (Attachment H)

A report from the Town Clerk on current activities and matters of interest to Council is attached.

11 REPORTS FROM EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

A verbal report from ward councillors who also serve on Epping Forest District Council on any matter that may be of interest to Epping Town Council.

A verbal report from Essex County councillors on any matters of interest to Epping Town Council.

12 FINANCIAL REPORT FROM 1st APRIL 2024 TO 31st MAY 2024 (Attachment I)

Statutory Basis: Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Key Member: Cllr G Scruton

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** and **APPROVE** the summary financial report for April and May 2024 and **DECIDE** if any further action is required.

13 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT (Attachment J)

Statutory Basis: Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Key Member: Cllr G Scruton

Council is requested to **APPROVE** the payment of accounts for April and May 2024.

For April, payments total: **£62,473.18**. (Payments from Barclays total £54.03 (please note a transfer from Barclays to the Co-operative of £30,000). Payments from the Co-operative total £60,730.11 (please note transfers of £1200 from the Cooperative to Co-operative online). Payments from the Co-operative Online total £1,689.04.)

For May, payments total: **£131,856.64**. (Payments from Barclays total £57,118.52 (please note transfers from Barclays to the Co-operative of £60,000). Payments from the Cooperative total £74,316.88 (please note transfers of £1000 from the Cooperative to Co-operative online). Payments from the Co-operative Online total £421.24.)

14 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (FINAL) (Attachment K)

Statutory Basis: Audit Commission Act 1998 s9 to 11; the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011; the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Key Member: Cllr G Scruton

The internal auditor made his final visit for the 2023-24 financial year on 28th May 2024 and his final report is attached. The internal auditor makes no recommendations.

Council is requested to **NOTE** this information.

15 ANNUAL RETURN 2023-24 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (Attachment L)

Statutory Basis: Audit Commission Act 1998 s9 to 11; the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011; the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Key Member: Cllr G Scruton

Council is required by law to complete an Annual Return for each financial year which is sent to the external auditor for approval. The requirements of the Annual Return are very rigid and include the Annual Governance Statement, the Accounting Statements and the exercise of public rights (a pre-arranged period of 30 days when electors can inspect the accounts).

The Town Clerk has included a summary of the measures Council has taken to ensure it can answer 'yes' to all questions in the Annual Governance Statement as per **Attachment L1**.

Council is requested to **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return) first by answering each question in turn and **AUTHORISE** the Town Mayor to sign the statements on behalf of the Town Council.

16 ANNUAL RETURN 2023-24 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS (Attachment L)

Statutory Basis: Audit Commission Act 1998 s9 to 11; the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011; the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Key Member: Cllr G Scruton

Once the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) of the Annual Return has been APPROVED, Council must **APPROVE** the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return).

Council is requested to **APPROVE** the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return) and **AUTHORISE** the Town Mayor to sign the statements on behalf of the Town Council.

17 ANNUAL RETURN 2023-24 EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS (Attachment L)

Statutory Basis: Audit Commission Act 1998 s9 to 11; the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011; the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Key Member: Cllr G Scruton

Council as a corporate body with transactions in the financial year, is required to make arrangements for the exercising of public rights; a period of 30 days when electors can inspect the accounts. These must fall within certain dates, which must include the first ten working days of July, ie Monday 1st July – Friday 12th July inclusive.

Council is requested to **APPROVE** the dates of the exercise of public rights as Monday 17th June 2024 until Friday 26th July 2024, in accordance with the requirements, as recommended by the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

18 FINANCIAL YEAR END POSITION 2023/24 (Attachment M)

Statutory Basis: Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Key Member: Cllr G Scruton

The Town Clerk has provided a summary of Epping Town Council's final 2023/24 year end position, following the closedown of the 2023/24 financial year by Rialtas

Business Solutions Ltd on 7th May 2024 as per **Attachment M**. Please note Council's year end date is 31st March 2024 (31st March each year).

Council is requested to:

(i) **NOTE** this information.

19 **PLAYGROUND INSPECTION REPORTS**

(Attachment N)

Statutory Basis: Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976 s19 & Local Government Act 1972, s111

Key Member: Cllr J Duffell

Epping Town Council manage five playgrounds in Epping Parish. These are checked weekly by our grounds team and more often if any issues are highlighted. Repairs are undertaken at point of need. Annually, our playgrounds are inspected by an independent internal inspector and detailed written reports are provided. We have been using the same inspection company in recent years, although the personnel attending are different. This company attend randomly so we don't know when they are visiting and have been previously referred by our insurance company.

Anything recorded as high risk or needing urgent attention is dealt with immediately. Those of low and medium risk receiving consideration. Between years, the play inspection reports are sometimes contradictory. The Town Supervisor is a qualified playground inspector (and his team are trained in this area). He will therefore balance findings with his own judgment and undertake any necessary works. He has identified additional risks that have not been reported by the independent assessment and these items will or have been dealt with. Much work is undertaken throughout the year to keep the playground standards high and the risks low. If anything was found to be unsafe at any time, it would be removed immediately. Unfortunately, misuse and vandalism are the biggest threats to the playgrounds. The playground inspection reports have been considered by the Town Clerk and Town Supervisor and any work highlighted as higher than Low Risk is provided as per **Attachment N**. (Please note: the reports are very lengthy and printing is to be minimised in accordance with Epping Town Council's Climate & Environmental Awareness Policy).

Generally, our playgrounds are of no cause for concern. Based on the reports and judgment, the works to be undertaken will be as follows:

1) Parklands, Coopersale – (New playground 2017)

No additional work required. 39 page report.

2) Lower Swaines – (New playground 2022)

No additional work required. 58 page report.

3) Frampton Road – (New playground 2017)

No additional work required. 37 page report.

4) Stonards Hill playground & Skate Park – (Playground 2010 approx. New works 2022)

Swings are being monitored and worked on. Basketball goal being monitored. Skate park being monitored (due to be replaced this year). Any trips sand back filled (weather affects this). 103 page report.

5) Ivy Chimneys – (Playground 2015).

Wood being monitored, natural cracking. Flooring being repaired and monitored where able to be. Infinity bowl (monitor, same as previous years. This is not repairable.) 69 page report.

Council is requested to **NOTE** this information and **DECIDE** if any further action is required at this stage.

20 **MAYOR'S GAMES AND MAYOR'S BADGE** (Attachment O)

Statutory Basis: Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s19; Local Government Act 1972, s111

Key Member: Cllr C Burgess

Former Town Mayor, Cllr Christine Burgess had met with the Air Cadets in the spring of 2024 to discuss a potential sporting/games events between the different branches of Cadets (Air/Army/Police). Former Deputy Town Mayor at the time, Cllr Cherry McCredie also attended those meetings and a later one in April was also attended by the Town Clerk.

Some further information is provided as per **Attachment O**.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **DECIDE**:

- (i) If it wishes to proceed with the event;
- (ii) If it wishes to proceed with the Mayor's badge.

21 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To resolve 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.

22 **TENNIS CONTRACTS** (Attachment P)

Statutory Basis: Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s19

Key Member: Cllr J Duffell

At the Ordinary Council meeting on 14th May 2024 (Minute #25 of 2024/25), Council **AUTHORISED** the Town Clerk to tender the tennis coaching at Stonards Hill recreation ground.

Some further information has been provided as per **Attachment P**.

Council is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **RECOMMENDATION** and **DECIDE** what to do.

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press are welcome to attend the meeting. Members of the public will only be permitted to speak at the beginning of the meeting during Public Question Time.