



EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

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

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TO ALL MEMBERS of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CGAC)

Cllr R Sharif	(Chairman & Deputy Mayor)
Cllr G Scruton	(Finance Key Member)
Cllr N Avey	(Administration Key Member)
Beverley Rumsey	(Town Clerk) (Non-voting member)

(NB: The Town Mayor to be called upon as a voting member if the Committee would not otherwise be quorate.)

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE** to be held in the Main Hall, Epping Hall, on **Tuesday, 28th October 2025 at 8pm** for the purpose of transacting the business as set out in the agenda below.

Beverley Rumsey
Town Clerk
22nd October 2025

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.

3 DISPENSATIONS

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

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTION TIME

The Chairman 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 MINUTES**(Attachment A)**

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 25th February 2025.

6 STATUS OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS THAT REQUIRE ACTION

There are no previous recommendations that require action.

7 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT REVIEW**(Attachment B)**

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 (each October and February):

Internal and External Audits: **October** & February

Internal Audit Programme: **October (Dealt with under agenda item 9)**

Statement on Internal Control: **October (Dealt with under agenda item 11)**

Risk Management Statement: **October (Dealt with under agenda item 11)**

Insurance Inventory: February

Asset Register: February

Internal Risk Register: February

Staffing Terms and Conditions: **October** & February

(Dealt with under agenda item 16)

Standing Orders: February

Financial Regulations: **October (Dealt with under agenda item 13)**. Please note: this would normally be reviewed at the February Corporate Governance meeting, but there have been new Model Financial Regulations issued in May 2024

Employee Handbook: **October (Dealt with under agenda item 15)**

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), Committed **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.

Please find attached the revised policy document review schedule, as per **Attachment B**.

Committee is requested to **NOTE** the above information.

8 INTERNAL AUDIT

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Committee are requested to **NOTE** that the first work of the internal auditor will be on 29th and 30th October 2025.

The internal audit report (first interim) will be brought to the Ordinary Council Meeting on 11th November 2025, once received.

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

9 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMME (Attachment C)

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

In 2020, the internal auditing programme of works covering 2020-2025 was APPROVED at the Ordinary Council meeting on 12th November 2020 (Minute #299 of 2020/21), as per **Attachment C**. Council requested that Auditing Solutions Ltd change the particular auditor that covers Epping Town Council's work, halfway through this five-year programme (2022-23) and this was done at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. In 2025, it will be necessary to consider the programme again when the current five-year programme expires.

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

10 EXTERNAL AUDIT (Attachment D)

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Members are requested to **NOTE** the externally audited Annual Return for 2024/25. The AGAR has previously been NOTED by Full Council at the Ordinary Council meeting on 9th September 2025. (Minute #189 of 2025/26).

The Town Clerk was pleased to report there are no qualifications or comments on the Annual Return (and therefore no matters needing attention).

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

11 REVIEW OF STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL & RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT (Attachments E & F)

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Council is required to maintain a Statement of Internal Control (**Attachment E**) and a Risk Management Statement (**Attachment F**) and ensure that each is reviewed annually. The Town Clerk has made some additions to both documents.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** these statements and additions and make appropriate **RECOMMENDATIONS** to Council.

12 **HALF-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY POSITION** **(Attachment G)**

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

The draft budget and first estimates will be considered at the Ordinary Council meeting in December 2025. It will be unlikely that the tax base figure arrives in time for the November meeting (from Epping Forest District Council). The second, more finely tuned accurate figures will be provided at the January Council meeting as usual, when the final budget is set, in line with legislation.

The overview summary position showing the first half of the financial year (1st April 2025-30th September 2025) is provided as per **Attachment G**. This shows that Council have performed fairly well against the income and expenditure budget, with no immediate causes for concern.

The Clerk/RFO has highlighted the need for attention to reserves in the forthcoming budget setting process.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **DECIDE** what **RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS** should be made to Council, if any.

13 **NEW FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: 2025** **(Attachments H & H1)**

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

In March 2025, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) advised of new model Financial Regulation; the changes being three amendments to procurement regulations in the model document. The Town Clerk has made the required amendments to Epping Town Council's Financial Regulations. The existing Financial Regulation are provided as per **Attachment H**. The revisions which will be made are highlighted in **Attachment H1**.

Please note: Epping Town Council's existing Financial Regulations March 2025 have been updated with the new updates (rather than taking the new model document). Epping Town Council adopted the current model document that had been updated significantly in May 2024.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **DECIDE** if they are happy to **RECOMMEND** the new Financial Regulations (as per **Attachment H** with the amendments in **Attachment H1**) to Council for ADOPTION.

14 **EXCLUSION OF 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.

15 **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK****(Attachments I & I1)**

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

At the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee meeting on 25th February 2025 (Minute #419 of 2024/25), the Town Clerk advised that the Employee Handbook would benefit from an external review to ensure it is compliant with updated and ever changing legislation. This was particularly the case for the policies contained within. Council have engaged Peninsula for HR and Health and Safety support and the Employee Handbook has now been updated. The Town Clerk is in discussion with Peninsula on the details, as Epping Town Council staff have slightly different contracts depending on their date of joining. The existing Employee Handbook is provided as per **Attachment I**. The new draft Employee Handbook is provided as per **Attachment I1**. **Please note:** the items under review due to the varying contracts are highlighted in yellow in **Attachment I1**.

RECOMMENDATION: The Employee Handbook (**Attachment I1**) should be **APPROVED** as a working draft with the amendments highlighted, subject to the Town Clerk personalising it in line with the varying contracts through discussions with Peninsula.

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

16 **STAFF TERMS & CONDITIONS/PAYSCALES****(Attachment J)**

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

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 spine points are included as per **Attachment J**.

The staff pay award for 2025/26 was announced in July 2025, much earlier in the year than usual. This was backdated to 1st April 2025 as always. This equated to a 3.2% increase across all scale points, rather than a set figure.

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

17 **STAFFING MATTERS****(Attachment K)**

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

An overall staffing update is provided as per **Attachment K**.

Committee is requested to **NOTE** this information and **DECIDE** if any further action is required at the current time.

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