

MINUTES of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING** held in the Conference Room, Epping Hall, on **Tuesday 13th June 2023 at 8pm.**

PRESENT:

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

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: 4 members of the public & 1 member of the press

50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr L Burrows and Cllr N Avey. Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr J Whitehouse.

51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr L Burrows, Cllr C McCredie, Cllr R Sharif, Cllr Janet Whitehouse & Cllr Jon Whitehouse declare a non pecuniary interest as Epping Forest District councillors.

Cllr H Whitbread declares a non pecuniary interest as an Epping Forest District Councillor and Cabinet Member and an Essex County Councillor and Deputy Cabinet Member.

52 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

53 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME

Cllr H Whitbread entered here.

Dan Sly (Epping Football Club) addressed Council regarding the merger of Epping Youth FC with Epping Town FC and their desire to return to Stonards Hill recreation ground for their home matches, which Epping Town Council would discuss under excluded agenda item 26.

Council **NOTED** this information.

54 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 15th May 2023 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council, subject to clarification over Cllr Janet Whitehouse and Cllr Jon Whitehouse on committees (Christian names to be written out in full).

For clarification:

Key members & appointments to committees:

Playgrounds working party & budget working party: Cllr Jon Whitehouse

Appointments to outside bodies: Friends of Swaines Green: Cllr Jon Whitehouse

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 20th April 2023 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

55 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 23rd May 2023 **(Attachment C)**

56 COMMUNICATIONS TO NOTE/REQUIRING DECISION

(i) Milestone at Bell Common & Milestone at Palmers Hill

Cllr Jon Whitehouse entered here.

Jimmy Waters explained the situation with the milestones, as per **Attachment D**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Mr Waters would advise the Town Clerk when some progress/timings had been made with the stone masons and the Clerk would help facilitate the next steps, which would be brought back to Council as appropriate.

(ii) Epping Forest District Council licensing consultation information

Council **NOTED** the revised licensing consultation information, as per **Attachment D1**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

(iii) Epping Rotary health and wellbeing project

Barbara Scruton, President of Epping Rotary 2023/24 asked Epping Town Council if they wished to work with Epping Rotary on raising money for Stonards Hill recreation ground, as charities are able to access funding which Town Councils cannot.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Epping Town Council would like to work with Epping Rotary on fundraising ideas for Stonards Hill recreation ground;
- (ii) Cllr R Sharif would work with Barbara Scruton on developing ideas for this project to be brought back to Council.

57 TOWN MAYOR & DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES

The duties undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor since the Ordinary Council meeting on 15th May 2023 were **NOTED**, with the following addition:

Town Mayor Community speedwatch (non ETC) 7th June 2023

58 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Reports from members were received on meetings or visits since the Ordinary Council meeting on 15th May 2023:

Cllr G Scruton	Blue plaque St Margaret’s Hospital	5 th June 2023
Cllr H Pegrum	Blue plaque unveiling St Margaret’s	5 th June 2023
Cllr Janet Whitehouse	Epping in Bloom scarecrow festival	?? June 2023
	Copped Hall open day	
	Blue plaque unveiling St Margaret’s	5 th June 2023
Cllr J Duffell	Royal British Legion	9 th June 2023
Cllr H Whitbread	Ride London	
	Epping in Bloom scarecrow festival	
	Copped Hall open day	
Cllr Jon Whitehouse	Blue plaque unveiling St Margaret’s	5 th June 2023
Cllr M Wright	Blue plaque unveiling St Margaret’s	5 th June 2023

59 REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

The Town Clerk highlighted the Town Show on Sunday 2nd July 2023.

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

60 REPORT FROM EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr H Whitbread: EFDC there is a new Cabinet. Cllr H Whitbread is the Cabinet Member for Housing. Car park progressing. Will be on site for swimming pool shortly.

EFDC are running lots of holiday clubs and activities for children.

Cllr Jon Whitehouse: Consultations on masterplanning for North Weald and Latton Primary should be imminent. EFDC officers should be able to advise about masterplanning for South Epping.

61 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 1ST APRIL TO 31ST MAY 2023

Council considered the summary financial report for April and May 2023, 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;
- (ii) No further action was required at the current time.

62 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council’s Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton presented the payment schedules for April and May 2023. Council **APPROVED** the payment of accounts for April and May 2023.

For April, payments total: **£57,600.97**. (Payments from Barclays total £53.51 (please note a transfer from Barclays to the Co-operative of £30,000). Payments from the Cooperative total £59,267.59 (please note a petty cash withdrawal of £200). Payments from the Co-operative Online total £279.87.)

For May, payments total: **£109,859.14** (Payments from Barclays total £51,254.08 (please note a transfer from Barclays to the Co-operative of £50,000). Payments from the Cooperative total £58,473.16. Payments from the Co-operative Online total £131.90.

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 April and May were **APPROVED** as presented in the schedule.

63 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (FINAL)**

The internal audit report (final) was presented as per **Attachment I**, following the auditor's remote work at the end of May 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the 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;
- (ii) The report was **NOTED** with no further action at the current time.

64 **ANNUAL RETURN 2022-23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

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).

During the remote visits of the internal auditor, any comments or actions have been detailed, as per **Attachment J1**. The Town Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer, considers that Council can answer 'yes' to the items in Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), Annual Governance Statement 2021/22.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the 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;
- (ii) The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the Annual Return) was **APPROVED** (by answering yes to each question in turn) and the Town Mayor was **AUTHORISED** to sign the statements on behalf of the Town Council.

65 **ANNUAL RETURN 2022-23 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

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 was requested to **APPROVE** the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return), as per **Attachment J**, and **AUTHORISE** the Town Mayor to sign the statements on behalf of the Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as 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;
- (ii) The Accounting Statements were **APPROVED** (Section 2 of the Annual Return) and the Town Mayor **AUTHORISED** to sign the statements on behalf of the Town Council.

66 **ANNUAL RETURN 2022-23 EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS**

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 usually, must include the first ten working days of July, ie 3rd-14th July inclusive.

Council was requested to **APPROVE** the dates of the exercise of public rights as Monday 19th June 2023 until Friday 28th July 2023, in accordance with the requirements, as recommended by the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the 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
- (ii) Council **APPROVED** the dates of the exercise of public rights as Monday 19th June 2023 until Friday 28th July 2023, in accordance with the requirements, as recommended by the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

67 **FINANCIAL YEAR END POSITION 2022/23**

A summary of Epping Town Council's final 2022/23 year end position, following the closedown of the 2022/23 financial year by Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd on 23rd May 2023, was provided as per **Attachment K**. Please note Council's year end date is 31st March 2023 (31st March each year).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

68 **DATA PROTECTION INFORMATION/TRAINING**

Council received the data protection information/training, as per **Attachment L**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the General Data Protection Regulation.

69 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Council considered the information regarding Epping Town Council's Planning Committee membership.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, sch1, para 8;
- (ii) Cllr J Duffell would be a reserve member on Epping Town Council's Planning & General Purposes Committee, to be called upon if needed.

70 SAFER EPPING MEETINGS

(i) Vice Chair and Administration

Council discussed the Safer Epping Vice Chair vacancy and administration.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s31;
- (ii) Cllr Christine Burgess would be Vice Chairman of Safer Epping;
- (iii) Cllr C McCredie would ask a resident to assist with agendas, minutes and administration.

(ii) Terms of reference

Council discussed the terms of reference for Safer Epping.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s31;
- (ii) The proposed amendments to the terms of reference were not quite correct. The Town Clerk was requested to draft some revised wording to bring to the next Council meeting.

71 WORKS TO EPPING WAR MEMORIAL

The Town Clerk advised members that the repairs to Epping War Memorial had been completed and the conservator had advised that the War Memorial was in fairly good structural condition. A condition report would follow.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act 1923, s1;

- (ii) The Clerk would pursue cleaning the cross at the top of the Memorial.

72 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.

73 ESSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS STAFF SUPPORT

Council considered the staff support packages which are now accessible by Councils who are members of the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) which include Epping Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) This statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s112.

74 EPPING FOREST HERITAGE TRUST SIGNAGE/ROUNDELS AGREEMENT

Council considered the Epping Forest Heritage Trust signage/roundels information and proposed agreement with Essex County Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s144 & s111;
 (ii) The Town Clerk was **AUTHORISED** to sign the agreement on behalf of Epping Town Council.

75 STONARDS HILL FOOTBALL CONTRACTS

Council discussed the Stonards Hill football contracts, as per **Attachment Q**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Public Health Act 1875, s164; Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions Act) 1976, s19;
 (ii) Epping Town FC would be permitted to return to playing at Stonards Hill recreation ground, as part of the merger with Epping Youth FC, subject to terms and conditions;
 (iii) The Town Clerk and Town Supervisor would work on the operational details and terms and conditions, which would be brought back to Council for approval.

CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr C Burgess, closed the meeting at **9.44pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date