

MINUTES of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING** held in the Conference Room, Epping Hall on **Tuesday 11th February 2025 at 8pm.**

PRESENT: Cllr C McCredie (Town Mayor & Chair)
 Cllr Janet Whitehouse (Deputy Town Mayor)
 Cllr C Burgess Cllr L Burrows Cllr J Duffell
 Cllr H Pegrum Cllr G Scruton Cllr H Whitbread
 Cllr Jon Whitehouse Cllr M Wright

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: 1 member of the press was present.

380 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr N Avey and Cllr R Sharif. Apologies for lateness were received from Cllr Jon Whitehouse, Cllr Janet Whitehouse, Cllr L Burrows, and Cllr H Whitbread.

381 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

382 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

383 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions or comments.

384 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 14th January 2025 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council, subject to the following amendments:

Cllr Janet Whitehouse advised that the information regarding Bell Common she reported on was from Tanith Cook, Head of Conservation, Epping Forest (City of London) (Appendix 1).

Cllr Jon Whitehouse (entered prior to minute 350 (not 353), so gave his report under minute number 350.

385 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	14 th January 2025	(Attachment B)
Planning & General Purposes Committee	28 th January 2025	(Attachment C)
Market Committee	4 th December 2024	(Attachment D)

(Please note: the market committee minutes for this meeting are not in the usual date order, as the minutes were completed after the usual relevant Council agenda).

386 COMMUNICATIONS TO NOTE/REQUIRING DECISION

(i) Blue plaque request: Church’s Butchers

Council considered the blue plaque request for Church’s Butchers, as per **Attachment E**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s145;
- (ii) A ‘blue’ plaque would be provided for Church’s Butchers;
- (iii) The Town Clerk would look at suitable colour options.

(ii) Epping Neighbourhood Plan

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

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Localism Act 2011.

(iii) The Epping Society: Open Parking letter

Council considered the open parking letter from the Epping Society, as per **Attachment E2**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111; Highway Act 1980;
- (ii) The Town Clerk would ask for a meeting with the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) to discuss the parking situation in Epping;
- (iii) This would be attended by Cllr C McCredie and Cllr H Pegrum.

(iv) Essex County Council: Air Quality Strategy consultation

Council considered Essex County Council’s Air Quality Strategy consultation.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111;
- (ii) The Town Clerk would respond to the strategy in accordance with Epping Town Council’s Climate & Environmental Awareness Policy aims and objectives (supporting climate and environmental issues);
- (iii) The Clerk would request assistance from Cllr Janet Whitehouse if needed.

(v) Lithium battery consultation

Council considered the lithium battery consultation, as per **Attachment E3**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111;
- (ii) The Town Clerk would reply to the consultation on Epping Town Council’s behalf, in support of the proposals.

387 TOWN MAYOR & DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR’S DUTIES

Cllr Janet Whitehouse entered here.

The duties undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor since the Ordinary Council meeting on 14th January 2025 were **NOTED**, subject to the following amendments:

Town Mayor:	Civic Reception meeting, rather than EFDC planning meeting	21/01/25
	Epping/Eppingen meeting (delete)	05/02/25
	Stonards Hill land pipes meeting	11/02/25
Deputy Mayor:	Safer Epping meeting	10/02/25
	Devolution briefing EFDC	11/02/25

388 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Reports from members were received on meetings or visits since the Ordinary Council meeting on 14th January 2025:

Cllr C Burgess	Martin Patience funeral	22 nd January 2025
	Ace Activities lunch	29 th January 2025
Cllr H Pegrum	Stonards Hill land pipes meeting	11 th February 2025
Cllr J Duffell	Royal British Legion meeting	1 st February 2025
Cllr G Scruton	Martin Patience funeral	22 nd January 2025
	Epping & Theydon Garnon Charities meeting	4 th February 2025
	Stonards Hill land pipes meeting	11 th February 2025

389 REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

Cllr H Whitbread and Cllr L Burrows entered here.

Cllr Jon Whitehouse explained there was a Public Rights of Way Officer at Epping Forest District Council.

Cllr Janet Whitehouse, Cllr John Duffell and Cllr Christine Burgess will look at the archive material at Epping Hall.

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

390 REPORTS FROM EPPING FOREST DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr Jon Whitehouse entered here.

Epping Forest District Council

Cllr Janet Whitehouse:

Place/Scrutiny. Empty homes back into use, council tax to use rooms.

3rd wheely bin – blue lid not sacks. Very soon. Expense at outset.

Cllr Holly Whitbread:

EFDC budget – savings, financial pressures, economic review and finance.

£1.4 million saving.

2.99% Council Tax rise. Scrutiny — EFDC full council budget presented Thurs 13 Feb 25

Essex County Council

Cllr Holly Whitbread:

ECC budget. Local Government reform.

Budget there. Highways, adult social care, John Spence Deputy

Lots of question marks. Simplifies local government.

Unknown number of unitary authorities. Maybe £1.5 m savings/positives.

Mayor – investment for infrastructure. 18 CEOs now 5 or 6

A lot of question marks, going to move quickly.

Full briefings, town and parish councils for more information

Financial benefits. Essex helped shame more unitarisation. Boundaries broken up.

Recent Labour government. Early in the process, more shaping.

Improved communications between Councils eg EFDC and ECC

Eg sheltered housing. (London boroughs, Councils together.

391 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31ST JANUARY 2025

Council considered the summary financial report for January 2025, 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.

392 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton presented the payment schedules for January 2025 totalling £58,612.84. (Barclays: £72.47, The Co-operative £58,160.29 & The Co-operative online £380.08).

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 2025 were **APPROVED** as presented in the schedule.

393 QUALIS DEVELOPMENT NAMES

Council considered the motion tabled by Cllr John Duffell regarding the Qualis development names.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Town Clerk would write to Qualis and request that the names of Gardenia Court and Verdant Place be changed to Old School Court and Homestead Place respectively, to reflect the historic connections to the town.

394 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2025 DATE AND FORMAT**(i) Date**

Council considered the date of the Annual Town Meeting 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s9;
- (ii) The Annual Town Meeting would be held on Thursday 1st May 2025 (as there were no Essex County Council elections);
- (iii) If the Hall was needed for elections for any other reason, it would be held on Thursday 17th April 2025.

(ii) Format

Council considered the format of the Annual Town Meeting 2025, as per **Attachment J**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s9;
- (ii) Welcome from the Town Mayor, with updates from the Chairman of Planning and Key Member for Finance;
- (iii) Input from EFDC and ECC councillors;
- (iv) Possible speech on devolution;
- (v) 3 questions for round the table discussions:
 - 1. Christmas Lights, 2. hat community facilities would people like to see,
 - 3. How can we attract new shops and businesses.

395 EPPING EMERGENCY PLAN

Council considered the information regarding Epping's Emergency Plan and volunteers.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act, s111;
- (ii) The Town Clerk would advertise for possible volunteers through local community organisations and ask community volunteers already known to Council (retired GPs/firemen, etc);

- (iii) A list of contacts and a draft plan would be created for Council to consider.

396 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.

397 TOWNSPERSON OF THE YEAR 2024

Council considered the nominations for Townsperson of the Year 2024, as per **Attachment K**.

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 2024 was chosen and this would be awarded at the Mayor's Civic Reception in April 2025.

398 YOUNG TOWNSPERSON OF THE YEAR 2024

Council considered the nominations for Young Townsperson of the Year 2024, 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 Young Townsperson of the Year 2024 was chosen and this would be awarded at the Mayor's Civic Reception in April 2025.

CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr C McCredie, closed the meeting at **9.27pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date