

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

PRESENT:

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

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: 1 member of the press was present.

500 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

501 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr G Scruton declared a potentially pecuniary interest in agenda item 20 and would leave the meeting and not be involved in the discussions or vote on this item.

All members declared that they knew the tenant relating to agenda item 20.

502 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

503 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions or comments.

504 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 11th March 2025 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council.

505 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	11 th March 2025	(Attachment B)
Planning & General Purposes Committee	25 th March 2025	(Attachment C)
Market Committee*	31 st March 2025	

(*Minutes in excluded section of the agenda.)

506 COMMUNICATIONS TO NOTE/REQUIRING DECISION

(i) **Section 137 spending limit: 2025-26**

Council **NOTED** the new S137 spending limit for 2025-26, as per **Attachment D**.

This adjustment allows the first tier of local government to allocate a limited amount of funds for purposes that do not fall under any other specific statutory powers, enabling them to utilise their portion of council tax to support and enhance their communities.

This means the maximum spend under this power is £105,816.30 (No of electors: 9533 x £11.10).

When a Town Council makes a decision, they must:

- a) have a power to undertake the duty and b) know how it is to be financed.

Grant spending should be made under the appropriate power for that spend. Where there is no power, s137 spending may be used for very specific purposes.

(ii) Epping Hall office reconfiguration project

Council **NOTED** the planning permission information as per **Attachment E**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Town Clerk should progress the project as soon as possible;
- (ii) The Town Clerk should obtain a quotation for the electrics to be considered by the Key Member for Epping Hall and the Key Member for Finance.

(iii) Epping Forest District Association of Local Councils

Council **NOTED** the information regarding the Epping Forest District Association of Local Councils, as per **Attachments F-F2**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Epping Town Council **APPROVED** the constitution as per **Attachment F2** and **ACCEPTED** being part of the District Association as detailed.

507 TOWN MAYOR & DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES

The duties undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor since the Ordinary Council meeting on 11th March 2025 were **NOTED**, with the following additions:

Town Mayor:	Devolution webinar	3 rd April 2025
Deputy Town Mayor:	Devolution webinar	3 rd April 2025

508 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Reports from members were received on meetings or visits since the Ordinary Council meeting on 11th March 2025:

Cllr C Burgess	Meeting regarding Menorah	8 th April 2025
Cllr H Pegrum	Meeting regarding Menorah	8 th April 2025
Cllr G Scruton	Meeting regarding Menorah	8 th April 2025
Cllr N Avey	Meeting regarding Menorah	8 th April 2025

509 REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS

The Town Clerk advised that details surrounding the Stonards Hill recreation ground land pipes were still close to being confirmed and Council would be informed once complete.

The Town Clerk highlighted the VE Day Beacon Lighting event on Thursday 8th May 2025.

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

510 REPORTS FROM EPPING FOREST DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

There were no reports from Epping Forest District Councillors or Essex County Councillors.

511 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31st MARCH 2025

Council considered the summary financial report for March 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.

512 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton presented the payment schedules for March 2025 totalling £72,078.68 (Barclays: £71.72, The Co-operative £71,889.73 & The Co-operative online £117.23). Please note a transfer of £40,000 from Barclays to 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 March 2025 were **APPROVED** as presented in the schedule.

513 BANK BALANCES: AT 31st MARCH 2025

Council **NOTED** the bank balances at 31st March 2025, as per **Attachment K**. The Town Clerk/RFO advised that approximately £4,500 would be added to the Nationwide Business Bond balance in interest.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

514 FINANCIAL SUMMARY POSITION, YEAR END CLOSE DOWN & BAD DEBTS

(i) Financial Summary Position and Year End Close Down

Council **NOTED** the information regarding the year end close down by RBS Omega on 21st May 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government and Accountability Act 2014; Accounts and Audits Regulations 2003; Local Government Act 1972, S151; Epping Town Council Financial Regulations 9.4

(ii) Bad debts

(a) 2024/25

Council **NOTED** that bad debts for 2024/25 were being chased.

(b) 2023/24

Council **NOTED** there were no bad debts for 2023/24, so the total written off was £0.

515 ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Council considered the Asset of Community Value information, evidence form and distribution costs, as per **Attachment M**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Localism Act 2011, ss87-108;
- (ii) Distribution to the 1450 local homes as detailed was **APPROVED** and this would be progressed.

516 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.

517 CEMETERY SOFTWARE

Council considered the Cemetery Software packages, as per **Attachment N**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10; Local Government Act 1972, s214 (6);
- (ii) All software and association training detailed in **Attachment N** was **APPROVED**.

518 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2025

Cllr Janet Whitehouse and Cllr Jon Whitehouse entered the meeting during this item.

Council considered the Christmas Lights information as per **Attachment O**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s145; s111;
- (ii) The stars would be pursued, subject to the necessary power source permissions;
- (iii) Residents would be asked for comments on the draft plans at the Annual Town Meeting on 1st May 2025.

519 JACK SILLEY PAVILION CAFÉ TERMS

Cllr G Scruton left the meeting at this point, as he is related to the tenant.

Council **CONSIDERED** the information and terms regarding Julie's café at Stonards Hill recreation ground, as per **Attachment P**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111;
- (ii) The café rent would remain the same at the current time;
- (iii) Costed proposals would be brought to Council for consideration and the rent would be revisited should alterations be decided upon.

520 BAKERS LANE PUBLIC TOILETS ARRANGEMENTS

Cllr G Scruton rejoined the meeting.

Council **CONSIDERED** the information relating to Bakers Lane public toilets.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Public Health Act 1936, s87;
- (ii) Council were happy with the partnership working detailed in **Attachment Q**.

521 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS (EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC ITEMS)

Council **CONSIDERED** the market minute information, as per **Attachment R**.

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.

Market Committee 31st March 2025

CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr C McCredie, closed the meeting at **9.45pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date