MINUTES of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE Held at Epping Hall, St. John's Road, Epping on Tuesday 22nd October 2024 at 8pm.

PRESENT:	Cllr C McCredie Cllr Janet Whitehouse	(Town Mayor) (Chairman & Deputy Town Mayor)
	Cllr G Scruton Cllr N Avey	(Key Member Finance) (Key Member Administration)
	CIII IN AVEy	(Rey Member Auministration)

Cllr C McCredie chaired this meeting.

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

239 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

240 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

241 **DISPENSATIONS**

There were no dispensations.

242 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions or comments.

243 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Corporate Governance Committee held on 27th February 2024 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

244 STATUS OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations of the CGAC (from their meeting on 27th February 2024) were adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council meeting on 12th March 2024 (Minute #467 of 2023/24):

- (i) Epping Town Council's Standing Orders should be APPROVED, with no amendments;
- Epping Town Council's Financial Regulations should be RE-APPROVED, with one amendment (Attachment C);
- (iii) The Internal Risk Register should be RE-APPROVED by Council (Attachment D);
- (iv) The Asset Register 2024 (Attachment E), should be APPROVED as a correct record of Council's assets at this time;
- (v) Council should continue to record assets as individual items with a value equal to or greater than £1000 in the Asset Register;

ATTACHMENT A

- (vi) The Complaints Procedure (Attachment F); should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council
- (vii) The Recruitment Policy, with minor amendments, (Attachment G) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (viii) The Health & Safety Policy with minor amendments (Attachment H) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (ix) The Grant Awarding Policy, with a minor amendments, (Attachment I) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (x) The Procurement Policy, with minor amendments, (Attachment J) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (xi) The Training and Development Statement, with no amendments, (Attachment K) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (xii) The Market Policy, with no amendments (Attachment L) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (xiii) The Tree Management Policy, with minor amendments (Attachment M) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (xiv) The Investment Strategy Policy, with amendments, (Attachment N) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (xv) The Balance of Trade Policy (Market), with minor amendments, (Attachment O) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (xvi) The Climate & Environmental Awareness Policy, with minor amendments, (Attachment P) should be RE-APPROVED as a policy of Council;
- (xvii) The insurance policies & reconciliation would be brought to Council in advance of the July 2024 meeting;
- (xviii) The situation regarding a Data Protection Officer should be monitored and someone engaged at point of need;
- (xix) Staff matters and terms and conditions should be APPROVED (please note: these were reported under agenda item 21 – in an exclusion of press and public item).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, sch12, para 42; Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014, Local Government Act 1972, s111, Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members & Officers) order 2004, Local Government Act 1972, s112, Local Government Act 1972, s101;

*Please note: Attachments with a line through refer to the Attachment number that was issued at that particular meeting (eg Attachment K)

245 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT REVIEW

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 are as follows:

Internal and External Audits: October 2024 & February 2025 (Dealt with under agenda items 8 & 10) Internal Audit Programme: October 2024 (Dealt with under agenda item 9) Statement on Internal Control: October 2024 (Dealt with under agenda item 11) Risk Management Statement: October 2024 (Dealt with under agenda item 11) **Insurance Inventory: February 2025** Asset Register: February 2025 Internal Risk Register: February 2025 Staffing Terms and Conditions: October 2024 & February 2025 (Dealt with under agenda item 16) Standing Orders: February 2025 Financial Regulations: February 2025 October 2024 (Dealt with under agenda item 14). 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 2024 (Dealt with under agenda item 12)

Please note these are 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.

Committee **NOTED** the above information.

246 INTERNAL AUDIT

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Committee **NOTED** that the first work of the internal auditor for the 2024/25 financial year will be on 27th and 28th November 2024.

The internal audit report (first interim) would be brought to the Ordinary Council Meeting on 10th December 2024, once received.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

247 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMME

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Members **NOTED** 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 B**. 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. A further programme would need to be considered in 2024/25.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

248 EXTERNAL AUDIT

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Members **NOTED** the externally audited Annual Return for 2023/24. The AGAR had previously been NOTED by Full Council at the Ordinary Council meeting on 10th September 2024 (Minute #188 of 2024/25).

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

249 REVIEW OF STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Committee **CONSIDERED** the revised statement on internal control and revised risk management statement **(Attachments D & E).**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Both statements, with additions, should be **RECOMMENDED** for **APPROVAL** by Council;
- (ii) Members should be made aware of the EALC training calendar and costs involved.

250 EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Committee **CONSIDERED** the employee handbook with amendments **(Attachment F1)**. The Town Clerk has advised that this document would benefit from an external review.

ATTACHMENT A

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The employee handbook with amendments should be **RECOMMENDED** for APPROVAL by Council, subject to amendments to the Councillors, Staff and Work section on page 25 (shown).
- (ii) Councillors should be made aware of the Staff and Councillor protocols within the handbook.

251 HALF-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY POSITION

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Committee NOTED the half-year summary financial position, as per Attachment G.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

252 NEW FINANCIAL REGULATIONS: 2024

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

Committee considered the new Financial Regulations 2024, as per Attachment H.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

 (i) The new Financial Regulations October 2024, as per Attachment H should be RECOMMENDED as the new Financial Regulations for Epping Town Council with the amendments made.

253 **CEMETERY REGULATIONS**

Statutory Basis: Open Spaces Act 1906, s9, 10

Committee **NOTED** the correction to the Cemetery Regulations, as per **Attachment I**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) No further action was required in addition to this.

254 STALL ALLOCATION POLICY

Statutory Basis: Food Act 1984, s50, 60

Committee considered the Stall Allocation Policy, as per Attachment J.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) The stall allocation policy should be **RECOMMENDED** for **APPROVAL** as a policy of Epping Town Council.

255 **INVESTMENTS**

Statutory Basis: The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

(i) Investment Strategy

Committee considered the Investment Strategy, as per Attachment K.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) The Investment Strategy should be **RECOMMENDED** for **APPROVAL** as a policy of Epping Town Council.

(ii) Investing: CCLA (Churches, Charities & Local Authorities)

Committee considered the CCLA investing information, as per Attachment L.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) Committee would **RECOMMEND** that this would not be pursued at the current time (insufficient surplus funds), but may be revisited in the future if funds allow.

256 SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s111

Committee considered the Safeguarding Policy as per Attachment M.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) The Safeguarding Policy should be **RECOMMENDED** for **APPROVAL** as a policy of Epping Town Council.

257 VOLUNTEERING POLICY

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s111

Committee considered the Volunteering Policy as per Attachment N.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(i) The Volunteering Policy should be **RECOMMENDED** for **APPROVAL** as a policy of Epping Town Council.

258 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.

259 STAFF TERMS & CONDITIONS/PAYSCALES

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Committee **NOTED** that 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 were included (Attachment O).

At the time of writing, there had been no staff pay award for 2024/25. This means year on year staff are working for less. The Clerk is expecting a staff pay award for 2024/25 and if this is the case, this will be very late again and backdated. The Clerk/RFO will build 4% into the income and expenditure budget setting process to mirror some previous increases.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

260 **STAFFING MATTERS**

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Committee **CONSIDERED** and **NOTED** the staffing update as per **Attachment P**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

261 HUMAN RESOURCES (HR)/STAFF SUPPORT AND HEALTH & SAFETY SUPPORT

Statutory Basis: Local Government Act 1972, s112

Committee **CONSIDERED** the Human Resources (HR)/staff support and health & safety support update as per **Attachment Q**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

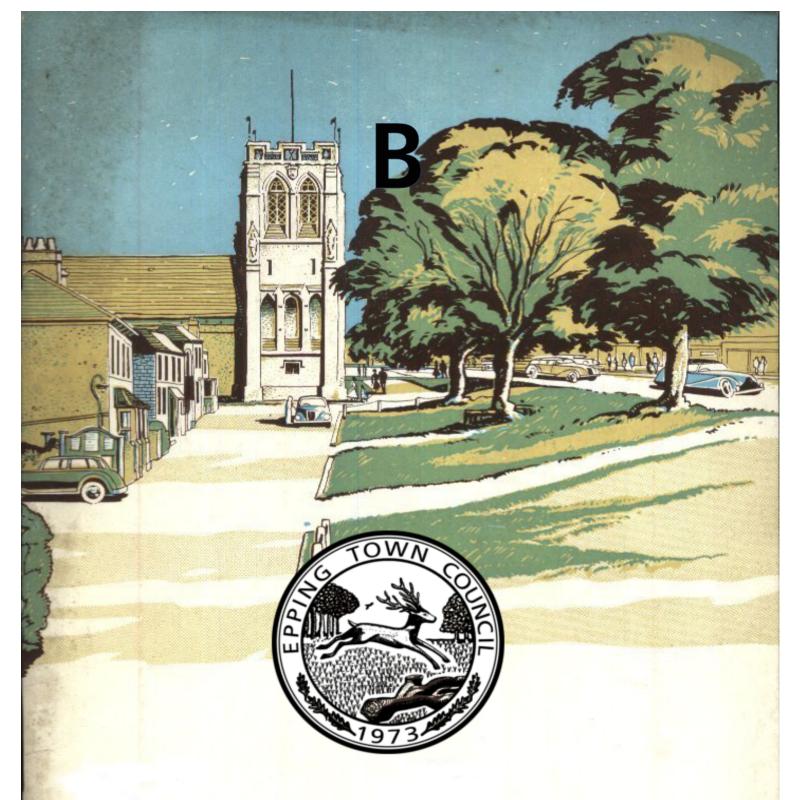
- (i) Committee would RECOMMEND both Human Resources (HR)/staff support and health & safety support, as per RECOMMENDATIONS 1 and 2 in Attachment Q, to Council;
- (ii) This would be financed from Service and Committee Support, (100/4045) Subscriptions and Licences.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **9.12pm**.

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

Signature of Chairman

Date



Standing Orders

March 2025

Please note: Items in bold are legal requirements for Council and should not be changed without Council legal advice.

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1. Rules of debate at meetings

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a

motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- n Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. in exercise of a right of reply.
- o During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- p A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- q When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;

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- iii. to adjourn the debate;
- iv. to put the motion to a vote;
- v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
- vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
- vii. to exclude the public and press;
- viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
- ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.
- r Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- s Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r) above, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

2. Disorderly conduct at meetings

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. Council Meetings

Full Council meetings Committee meetings Sub-committee meetings

Location

a Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.

Notice

- b The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.
- c The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice

Public Admission

- d Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed 10 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

- g Subject to standing order 3(f) above, an individual member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e) above, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

Speaking at Meetings

- i A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and when speaking stand (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

Media

- Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is permitted, subject to the following conditions:
 - A person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present;.
 - A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about as meeting as it takes place without permission;
 - No equipment will be permitted that makes noise or emits light that could interfere or distract from the business of Council;
 - Flash photography will not be permitted in the Council Chamber.
- m The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

Chairing Meetings

- n Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Town Mayor may in his absence be done by, to or before the Deputy Town Mayor.
- The Town Mayor, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Town Mayor is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Town Mayor, if present, shall preside. If both the Town Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.

Voting

- p Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting.
- q The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.
 See standing orders 5(i) and (j) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Town Mayor at the annual meeting of the Council.
- r Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

Minutes

- s The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors present and absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;

- iv. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- v. if there was a public participation session; and
- vi. resolutions made.
- t A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.

Quorum

u No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council or committee are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three. See standing order 4d (viii) below for the quorum of a committee or sub-

committee meeting.

- v If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- w A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours.

4. Committees and sub-committees

- a Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.
- b The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.
- c Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing

Approved 12th March 2024 (Council) Review date: February 2025 (CGAC) committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full Council;

- iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
- iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
- v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 3 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
- vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
- vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
- viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which shall be no less than three;
- ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- xii. may dissolve a committee.

5. Ordinary Council meetings

- a In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.
- b In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.
- d In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.
- e The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor of the Council.
- f The Town Mayor, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in

office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.

- g The Deputy Town Mayor, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Town Mayor at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- h In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Town Mayor has been elected. The current Town Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- i In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Town Mayor has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- j Following the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:
 - i. In an election year, delivery by the Town Mayor and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Town Mayor of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
 - vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
 - viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4 above;
 - ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - x. Review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
 - xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
 - xiii. Confirmation of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
 - xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
 - xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
 - xvii. Confirmation of the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
 - xviii. Confirmation of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media; and
 - xix. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council up to and including the next annual meeting of full Council.

6. Extraordinary meetings of the Council, committees and sub-committees

- a The Town Mayor may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- b If the Town Mayor does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any 2 members of the committee [and the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee [or sub-committee].

7. Rescission of Previous resolutions

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

8. Voting on appointments

a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f Subject to standing order 9(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.

10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer;
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - viii. to require a written report;
 - ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
 - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
 - xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xvii. to close a meeting.

11. Handling confidential or sensitive information/managing information

See also Standing Order 20

- a The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.
- b The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which

information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (eg the Limitation Act 1980).

- c The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- d Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

12. Draft minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a) (i) above.
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

"The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

e Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. Code of conduct and dispensations

See also standing order 3(t) above.

a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

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- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f) above, dispensations requests shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or a sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:
 - i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or
 - ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area or
 - iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

14. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by the District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined [(England) and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d) below].
- c The Council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
 - iii. [(Wales) indemnify the councillor or non-councillor with voting rights in respect of his related legal costs and any such indemnity is subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council.]
- d Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

15. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
 - i. at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, a committee and a subcommittee serve on councillors, by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed

summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and;

See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full Council and standing order 3 (c) above for a meeting of a committee.

- ii. give public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before
 a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee
 (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of
 the Council convened by councillors is signed by them);
 See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full
 council and standing order 3(c) above for a meeting of a committee.
- iii. subject to standing order 9 above, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 7 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- iv. convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Town Mayor, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;
- v. facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
- vi. receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;
- vii. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- viii. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998 and requests relating to the General Data Protection Regulation, in accordance with and subject to the Council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form;
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed; See also standing order 22 below.
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in the minutes of the Planning & General Purposes Committee;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next meeting of the Planning & General Purposes Committee;
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

See also standing order 22 below.

16. Responsible Financial Officer

a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. Accounts and accounting statements

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide.
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported

and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the full Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the Council (income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The annual return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for consideration and formal

approval before 30 June.

18. Financial controls and procurement

- a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. procurement policies (subject to standing order 18(c) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where a contract has an estimated value of less than **£25,000**.
 - vi. The procurement and award of contracts covered by the 2015 Regulations which have an estimated value of £25,000 or more must satisfy the requirements of the 2015 Regulations which include use of the Contracts Finder website, regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity.
- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c Financial regulations shall confirm that a proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 18(d) below and in a manner compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).
- d Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
- an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification
 (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the
 Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective
 contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender
 outside the prescribed process;
- iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate (see vii);
- tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer or submitted by email marked private and confidential which shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillors after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
- v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
- vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- vii. The procurement and award of contracts covered by the 2015 Regulations which have an estimated value of £25,000 or more must satisfy the requirements of the 2015 Regulations which include use of the Contracts Finder website.
- e Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.

19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council or another Committee is subject to standing order 11 above.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Town Mayor or, if he is not available, the Deputy Town Mayor of any significant absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting. Significant absence is defined as (i) a single absence lasting more than 8 working days, (ii) 3 periods of absence in any rolling 12 month period or a pattern of absences that does not otherwise fall within (i) or (ii) above.

- c The Town Mayor, or in his absence, the Deputy Town Mayor shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Town Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by Council.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee shall contact the Town Mayor, or in his absence, the Deputy Town Mayor in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Council.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised relates to the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor, this shall be communicated to another member of Council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Council.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g The Council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above if so justified.
- i Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above shall be provided only to the Town Clerk.

20. Requests for information/responsibilities to provide information

See also Standing Order 21

Requests for information held by the Council shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and from 25th May 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation. The Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme, in accordance with freedom of information legislation.

- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Town Mayor. Council shall have the power to do anything required to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, so long as it does not breach other legislation.
- c If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000), The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

21. Responsibilities under Data Protection legislation

See also Standing Order 11

- a Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer;
- b The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data;
- c The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach;
- d The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken;
- e The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date;
- f The Council shall keep a written record of its processing activities.

22. Relations with the press/media

a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing orders 15(b) (xii) and (xvii) above.

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- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b Subject to standing order 23(a) above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.

24. Communicating with District and County councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the District and County Council representing the area of the Council.
- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the District and County Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

25. Restrictions on councillor activities

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. Standing orders generally

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a

special motion, the written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 above.

- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after he has delivered his acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

ATTACHMENT C

EPPING

COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS MARCH 2025

CANRA-BEWERKS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on 12th November 2024.

Date for review: February 2025

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in The Practitioners' Guide
 - Practitioners' Guide refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.6. The council must not delegate any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
- the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors
- 1.7. In addition, the council shall:
 - determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of [£5,000]; and

2. Risk management and internal control

- 2.1. The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.
- 2.2. The Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare, for approval by [the council], a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.
- 2.5. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:
 - ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
 - ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
 - prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and
 - allow the reconstitution of any lost records;
 - identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and
 - ensure division of responsibilities.
- 2.6. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair (currently Key Member for Finance) shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations for all accounts produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.

2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:
 - day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;
 - a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual {Governance and Accountability} Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual {Governance and Accountability} Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.
- 3.6. Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
 - is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and

- has no involvement in the management or control of the council
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
 - perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax (England) requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council at least annually in January for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft their budgets.
- 4.3. No later than [month] each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following financial years, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward by placing them in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the full council or as an accrual for items which will fall in the next financial year, at the discretion of the Clerk/RFO.
- 4.5. The budget working party shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council by December each year.

- 4.6. The draft budget forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the budget working party and a recommendation made to the council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and forecast, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.
- 4.9. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget. Epping Town Council submit by the end of January each year.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

- 5.7. For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk/RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;
- 5.9. Where the value is between £100 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk/RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates, which may include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, the Clerk and their team, shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
 - i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council or relevant committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
 - the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £1000 excluding VAT.
 - the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council {or Key Member for Finance}, for any items over £1,000 and below £3,000 excluding VAT.
 - a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £5,000 excluding VAT
 - {in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.}
 - the council for all items over £5,000;

¹ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

- 5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council {or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference} except in an emergency.
- 5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £3,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
 - (a) In a case of an extreme emergency, the Town Clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council, in conjunction with the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, which in the three parties' judgement it is necessary to carry out. This extreme emergency expenditure is subject to a limit of £15,000. All three parties will sign an emergency expenditure form to confirm the urgency and the Town Clerk shall report such action to full Council as soon as possible and as practicable thereafter.* (Added as in previous FRs as previously needed/used).
- 5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 5.20. An official order shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £100 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods. Orders may be used for any items deemed appropriate.
- 5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the Finance & Bookings Officer and Senior Finance Officer.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with the Co-Operative and Barclays. They also hold a Nationwide Business Saver account. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised,

the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.

- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the Senior Finance Officer. Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a signature by the Senior Finance Officer that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the Senior Finance Officer.
- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking and cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the council, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. For each financial year the RFO & Senior Finance Officer may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items, which the council may authorise in advance for the year, but the list of regular payments is itemised on the Council papers, which is how this is reported to Council.
- 6.7. A copy of this schedule of regular payments shall be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is made to reduce the risk of duplicate payments.
- 6.8. A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council for information and formal approval.
- 6.9. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments {only} in the following circumstances:
 - i. any payments of up to £1000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. payments of up to £3,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms), where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the Clerk/RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

6.10. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO & Senior Finance Officer shall be appointed as the Service Administrators. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify four councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.4. A Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be shown to two authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of a Service Administrator, an authorised signatory approved by the RFO and/or Senior Finance Officer shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each online payment is made.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting and included in the minutes.
- 7.9. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit may be reviewed by the council at least every two years, but this is currently reviewed through annual price renewals and contract renewals.
- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council] provided that each payment is approved two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The

approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS may be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years. At the current time, this Council does not make BACS or CHAPS payments.

- 7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed {or approved online} by [two members], evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order may be reviewed by the council at least every two years. At the current time, this is done through and annual cost review.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk/RFO and Senior Finance Officer or Finance Officer and Booking Officer. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.
- 7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 7.14. Remembered password facilities {other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification} should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members.
- 8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.
- 8.4. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a council meeting. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council at the next convenient meeting.

9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1000 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Clerk/RFO.

- 9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk {and RFO} {specify other officers} and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used, unless in particular or exceptional circumstances, up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy/requirements. Any such payments should be approved in advance by the Clerk/RFO.

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1. The Finance and Bookings Officer and RFO shall maintain a petty cash float account of up to £250 and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.
 - a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.
 - b) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
 - c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on any schedule of payments presented for approval.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 11.1.As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.
- 11.2. Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council {or relevant committee}.
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by [the finance committee] to ensure that the correct payments have been made.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the [Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government] (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must written be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least bi-annually.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO and Senior Finance Officer shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The Senior Finance Officer/RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted form the software by the due date, under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 and is made quarterly (at least annually) at the end of the financial year. This Council submits VAT returns quarterly.
- 13.7. Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first

instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash. ie banking should be done by two people.

13.8. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 13.9. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 13.10. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

14. Stores and equipment

- 14.1. The officer in charge of each area shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that area.
- 14.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 14.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 14.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

15. Assets, properties and estates

- 15.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 15.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 15.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 15.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

16. Insurance

- 16.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.
- 16.2. The Clerk/RFO shall give prompt notification to the Council of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 16.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The Clerk/RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 16.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually] by the council

17. Charities

17.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.]

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 18.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually. and following any change of Clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully. The Clerk/RFO must confirm that they accept the reason for suspension for the suspension to take place.
- 18.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, or by an electronic tendering process which has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use the Clerk's email address to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission (including the Clerk).
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order (council's standing order 18) and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken. Contracts over £25,000 will be subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

ATTACHMENT D

RISK REGISTER - EPPING TOWN COUNCIL - MARCH 2025

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

							Alternative	
	Risk	Impact	Likeli- hood	Severity	Control Measure	Review frequency	Review	Responsible Person/s
1.	Lack of forward planning and financial/ budgetary controls	 Lack of direction and prioritisation Needs of those in partner organisations not addressed Poor financial control Loss of respect and reputation 	Μ	н	 Business/action plan in operation In year budget reviews Feedback from Partners Monthly reconciliation for all accounts 	Annually Quarterly As required Monthly	Unexpected expense	Clerk/RFO & All Members
2.	Council lacks relevant skills and commitment	 Council fails to achieve its purpose Decision making bypasses Council Poor value for precept money Council ignores advice of Clerk 	L	Н	 Whilst difficult with democratic election process Try to select carefully Ongoing training for Councillors Close review of attendance Ongoing training for Clerk 	Annually & ongoing Every meeting Ongoing	Poor decisions through lack of knowledge	Chairman of Council
3.	Council becomes dominated by one or two or cliques form (Illegitimate Party dominance)	 Conflicts of interest Pursuit of personal agendas Decisions made outside Council Loss of interest by excluded members 	L	Н	 Clear Standing Orders regarding conduct of meetings and Conflict of Interests Clerk monitors Chairman monitors Select carefully 	Annually (or through CGAC when legislation changes) Ongoing monitoring		Chairman/Clerk
4.	Councillors	 Affect reputation 			Clear Standing Orders	Annually		Chairman

Risk Register - Epping Town Council

Reviewed: Feb 2024 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee). Approved: March 2024 (Council). Review date: Feb 2025 (Corporate Governance Advisory Committee).

	benefiting from being on Council	Conflicts of Interest	L	М	 Open system of payment Robust Internal Audit 	All meetings		Clerk Internal Auditor
5.	Poor reporting to Council	 Poor quality decision making Council becomes ill informed Clerk fails to keep Council informed 	М	Н	 Timely and accurate financial reporting Clear instructions to staff Regular project reports Clerk's ongoing training Clerk to ensure good reporting to Council Clerk appraisal 	Quarterly Ongoing Each meeting Ongoing	Reminder from District and County Project Problem	Clerk/Chairman
6.	Loss of key staff	 Failure in budgetary controls Correspondence backlog Lack of knowledge/loss of experience 	М	Н	 Succession Planning Clear office procedures Clear budgetary procedures Monitor remuneration packages Up to date job descriptions Good handover arrangements Ongoing communication and sharing of information Staff development and 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Loss of staff member	Chairman/Clerk /All staff

					training			
7.	Inadequacy of Precept	 Services not provided Lack of confidence in Council Strong budgeting process 	L	Н	 Regular in year budget reviews Detailed budget setting process and monitoring of funds Regular highlighting of any potential forthcoming high costs/necessary expenditure 	Every Council Meeting Annually & ongoing Ongoing as required	Unexpected event i.e. flooding	Clerk & All Members
8.	Failure to respond to electors wish to right of inspection	Loss of confidenceLoss of reputation	L	L	 Clear Standing Orders and Operating Protocols Adherence to Audit Regulations 	Annually Annually		Clerk
9.	Failure to register Members interests, gifts, etc	 Member could make inappropriate gains Could affect reputations 	L	М	 Clear code of conduct Clear procedure monitoring interests Clerk monitors 	Annually		Individual Member Clerk
10.	Failure to meet the requirements for LCAS	StatusReputation	М	L	 Monitor requirements for LCAS High standards 	As required		Clerk
11.	Poor document control	 Information not passed on in a timely manner Deadlines missed Lack of achievement 	М	М	 Clear Standing Orders Clear Job Descriptions Clear Office Procedures Good communication Ongoing policy document review 	Annually Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing		Clerk/All staff

					timetable			
12.	Lack of maintenance of Council owned property	 High cost of repair Injury to 3rd party leading to claims Damage to property 	М	Н	 Stock condition survey Regular routine maintenance Insurance cover Interim insurance updates if necessary 	Ongoing As required Annually Ongoing	Unexpected Natural Disaster Acquisitions /disposals	Clerk
13.	Damage or loss to Council owned property by 3 rd party or act of God	High cost of repair	н	L	 Insurance cover Good Fire Alarm Good Burglar Alarm Regular Maintenance Inspection 	Annually Ongoing		Clerk
14.	Damage to 3 rd party property or individual due to service or amenity provided	Claim against Council	L	М	 Insurance Regular checks of facilities Risk Assessments 	As required Ongoing Annually	Annually As reported	Clerk
15.	Loss of cash through fraud or dishonesty	 Reduction in available funds Loss of reputation 	L	L	 Clear financial procedures Adequate insurance cover Verify & attach copy order to invoice Fidelity guarantee cover (insurance) 	Annually Annually One offs Annually	On a Loss	All Members Clerk Internal Auditor
16.	Problems due to borrowing or lending	 Failure of 3rd party to repay loan Inability of Council to repay a loan 	L	L	 Include in annual budget Clear Standing Orders Office Procedures 	Quarterly reviews Annually Ongoing		Clerk/Members

17.	Failure to use grants for purpose for which they were intended	 Poor investments Lack of funds for project for which grant was intended Investigation into the use of funds 	L	L	 Review investments regularly Strong Financial Key Member Clear minutes Ensure funds properly ring fenced Clear financial procedures Review of funds 	Annually Ongoing Ongoing Annually	Economic climate	Clerk
18.	Ensure Council complies with law, in particular: • Health and Safety • Equal Opportunitie s • Data Protection • Human Rights • Disability and Discriminatio n • Employment Law	 Fines and Penalties from regulation bodies Employee action for negligence of grievance Risk of reputation 	M	H	 Comprehensive Standing Orders and Procedures Clear Job Descriptions Comprehensive Risk Assessments Ongoing training as legislation changes Professional membership such as EALC/NALC 	Annually Ongoing Annually Ongoing		Clerk/Members
19.	Risk of acting without proper	 Financial Loss – Criminal Charges 	М	Н	Ensure powers are researched and stated	All meetings		Clerk/Members

	powers. (Ultra vires)	 Loss of respect and reputation Loss of confidence Claim against Council Lack of knowledge 			in Agenda reportsOngoing training for Clerks and councillorsQualified Clerk			
20.	Risk of increasing regulatory burden preventing performance of work benefiting the parish	 Increased complaints from Precept payers Staff stress and retention problems Poor relationship between Officers and Members 	Μ	Н	 Ensure Members are advised of regulatory demands and the effect of these demands on workload Ensure the Members respond to consultations on regulatory issues Pressure on employees/workload is monitored by the Clerk 	As required Monthly meetings & Ongoing Ongoing & annually		Clerk
21.	Failure to identify Risks facing the Council & to put measures in place to mitigate such risks	Council encounters serious challenges for which no pre-planning has been undertaken	L	Н	 Clerk to review risk register & make appropriate recommendations Senior member of staff monitoring as a back up 	Annually	Serious challenge	Clerk & All Members
22.	Dramatic fall in investment and	Extreme difficulty in achieving budget targets	Н	Н	 Monthly Budget monitoring – Clerk 	Monthly		Clerk, Finance Key Member

	trading income	 Placing of deposits with one source (Council not protected by the FSCS guarantee of £75,000) 			 and Members must be aware of the risks and consequence of poor financial performance. A significant fall in income must be balanced with spending cuts or a drawdown of reserves (whichever is appropriate see 23 below). Spread investments across banks/building societies 	Annually/as required		and Council
23.	Inadequate Reserve funds	 Year end cash flow difficulties and/or failure to meet unforeseen expenditure (may result in need for unplanned and expensive borrowing) Unable to deliver service and functions 	L	Η	 Maintain Year end General Reserve level at between 3 to 6 months of the anticipated total expenditure. Maintain adequate levels of specific reserves for known recurrent spending priorities. Understanding of the function of funds and their importance 	Budget setting process and review in relation to ad hoc spending requests Ongoing training for Clerk/Cllrs		Clerk, Finance Key Member and Council
24.	Significant loss of computer facilities	Loss of administrative capacity	М	Н	 Maintain electronic backups both onsite and offsite Maintain separate off 	Ongoing	Cyber attack or threat of cyber attack	Clerk

					 site backup of accountancy data. Maintain battery backup to server (until server not used) Maintain contract with computer maintenance (good IT support) Monitor IT support and update as appropriate 		or breakdown	
25.	Loss of business continuity and income due to movement of premises	Loss of income/uncertainty/diffic ulty in maintaining services and functions	Μ	Η	 Strong details and safeguards in contract Strong lawyer No movement of premises without alternative premises Negotiations with community partners for to form back up plans (Unforeseen loss of income/business continuity managed through insurance) Adequate support required to facilitate a large-scale move 	Through any applicable contract negotiation and forward planning Long enough timescales to prepare and plan	Problem with developmen t	Clerk Chairman All members
26	Loss of continuity through a change of Council due to	Loss of knowledge and experienceRisk of poor decisions	Μ	M/H	 Strong/clear procedures in place which are followed 	Election time Ongoing	Poor decisions	Clerk All members

	elections				 Qualified Town Clerk Members to share knowledge amongst themselves to assist newer councillors Strong auditing checks 			
27	Loss of interest in Council's affairs by councillors and staff	 Poor decision making Poorer quality of work Poor member behaviour affecting the whole Council including Council's reputation 	Μ	L/M	 Continued engagement of councillors Continual involvement of staff in projects and training Sharing of information Interesting projects Staff monitoring and development Reminder of the importance of team working Regular reminders of proper practice/process External reporting of poor behaviour 	Ongoing	Poor decisions Poor work Feeling of apathy	Clerk/Chairman / All members/ All staff
28	Unexpected health emergency/	Unable to work in the normal mannerRemote working which	M/H	L/M	 Development of remote working methods if needed 	Health emergency •	Long term absence	Clerk/All staff/Council

	situation (such as Covid 19)	may lead to gaps in service/provision			 Team covering different functions so sharing of tasks Strong, diverse team who are multi-skilled in basic daily operations Regular team meetings to ensure engagement Regular contact to ensure continuity 	Requireme nt for home working	Building failure eg fire/flood	
29	Failure to fill all Council seats at an election	 Less input and potential diversity of opinion Less combined knowledge/experience 	Μ	L	 Ongoing members training Qualified Clerk Process for advertising vacant Council seats 	4 yearly after elections If required	Elections Vacant member seat	Clerk/Council
30	Failure to understand the implications of making financial cuts/not listening to advice and recommendatio ns	 Not upgrading cyber security or continuing professional advice and support memberships to save money (EALC, NALC, SLCC, ICCM, NAMBA) Cyber security and legal updates/knowledge becomes out of date exposing/increasing risk 	Μ	L	 Ongoing members training Qualified Clerk Listening to advice of Clerk and others Allocating sufficient budget to cover adequate support and memberships 	Membershi p renewals Ongoing	Awareness of out of date software or advice	Clerk

ATTACHMENT E

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL ASSET REGISTER

<u>31st March 2025</u>

The form of this asset register was adopted following receipt of advice from Peter Lacey of NALC/SLCC and a discussion with Jo Taylor of the Audit Commission (29th March 2010). It was reviewed by council in October 2012 (Minutes #201 & #222 of 2012/13 refer).

This Asset Register has four main purposes.

- a. It forms a basis for completion of box 9 in the 'Annual Return.'
- b. It forms a basis for decisions on risk and insurance issues.
- c. It provides information on the condition and need for replacement of machinery items.
- d. It provides assurance of the continued existence of Council's property

Annual Return – Fixed Assets

Items of machinery and equipment which have a useful life of more than one year and with a value greater than £1,000 are defined as 'Fixed Assets.' These are itemised below and their value reported in box 9 of Council's 'Annual Return.' Council does not depreciate or adjust fixed asset values and they are not calculated as part of a balance sheet. For fixed assets Council must approve the valuation methodology which must be applied consistently year on year. The preferred value will be the original acquisition cost. Alternative acceptable valuations are the replacement cost at a particular date or an insurance cost at a particular date. A fourth method of valuation for land or buildings which only have community value will be a nominal value of £1 (but please note the war memorial is listed at its original cost in 1922 of £650. The fixed asset value for any individual item will not usually be altered from year to year. Therefore, a change in the total value for fixed assets (in box 9 of the Annual Return) indicates the acquisition of new and/or the disposal of old assets of significance.

It will be necessary to review the threshold value for fixed assets (currently £1,000) annually to ensure the value continues to include the types of items currently listed as fixed assets. Such a review will require the revaluation of both the current and previous years' asset registers to give a consistent basis for comparison.

Insurance Decisions

From the above it follows that not all assets are classed as 'Fixed Assets.' The guidance indicates that only items with a relatively high value which will be useful for more than one financial year are entered to the 'Fixed Asset' box 9 on the Annual Return. Council has many smaller items which individually have a replacement value less than £1,000 (small tools, furniture, benches etc.). These items are listed in inventories and the total for any given inventory may far exceed £1,000. The total value of inventories may alter quite rapidly as new items are entered or removed. It is still necessary to ensure these items are secured to the council and to assess the risks of loss so that suitable insurance may be maintained if necessary. For these reasons the inventories are updated and reviewed annually. As a guide to these insurance decisions, an attempt will be made to maintain a replacement value for inventory items as well as for relevant fixed asset items. It will be necessary for Council to review the insurance valuation each year to ensure insurance levels remain relevant to the inventoried items. This should be undertaken at the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee meeting each February. This should be done annually, even if Council enters into a three-year insurance policy. Premiums are likely to increase annually even during a three-year arrangement, as Insurance Premium Tax changes and Council's assets may change.

Not all items are insured for damage or loss since the nature of risks is not the same for all items. Larger items of play equipment are very robust and comprise a number of smaller components. Damage to other items may be assessed as unlikely to occur or of insignificance cost if it does. Historically, Council has generally not insured play equipment, seats, bins or signs. These are now insured. Playground surfaces are, however, not insured, as they are very difficult to remove and have little use or value once removed to record as an asset. Some items are insured on all risks. These include laptops, audio visual equipment, the Mayor's Chain and tools. Vehicles are all insured on a fully comprehensive basis.

Replacement Decisions

Decisions to replace machinery and tools may be affected by the residual value/life of the existing equipment and the cost of replacement.

FIXED ASSETS

At 31st March 2025 the following assets were held:

Buildings Play Equipment and Street Furniture Road Legal Vehicles and Equipment Plant Machinery and Non-Road Registered Vehicles Civic Regalia Office Equipment Land (page) Total of Fixed Assets for Annual Return as at 31 st March 2025:	£3,986,681 £ 316,710 £ 83,381 £ 53,913 £ 18,035 £ 9,233 £ 7 £4.467.960
Total of Fixed Assets as at 31 st March 2024:	£4,464,960
Variance 31 st March 2024 - 31 st March 2025:	£3000
Explanation of Variance:	
Total of Fixed Assets added during the year (includes corrections)	£10750
Total of Fixed Asset removed during the year (includes corrections)	£7750
Sum Variance	£3000

	Assets disposed of during the year	
Purchase Cost £	Asset description	Purchase Cost £
10,750.00	Used Iseki SXG 326 HD mower	7750
	(7000 trade in price. Asset register listed as 7750)	
10750	TOTALS	7750
	Cost £ 10,750.00	Purchase Cost f Asset description 10,750.00 Used Iseki SXG 326 HD mower (7000 trade in price. Asset register listed as 7750)

Nb: Any movements are reflected in the lists below

Deed No.	Description	Size	Tenure	Acquisition Date	Buildings	(1)Uses	(2)Covenants etc	Value
L001	Land at Lindsey St Community Association	17,250 sq.ft	Freehold	14/3/2008	Lindsey Street Community Association premises (not ETC)	Freehold acquired from EFDC 2008 Lease renewal with Community Assoc commenced June 2008 (See Note A below)	Covenants: Community use Utility easement	£1
L002	Stonards Hill Recreation Ground, Stonards Hill	15.109 A	Freehold	?/3/1947	Scout hut (not ETC) Band hut (not ETC)	Ground leased to 4 th Epping Scouts Ground leased to EF Band	Covenants: Community centre Recreation ground Games and community Utility easements	£1
					Jack Silley Pavilion Garage Workshops House no 7	Tied rental to Groundsman (See Note B below)	Handgate licences 6a Palmers Hill Vehicle (Currently not operative with current owner) <u>s.106 obligation</u> planting footpath	
L003	Lovelock's Field, Swaines Green	1.78 Ha	Freehold	15/8/2005	None	(See Note C below)	Covenants: Open Meadow with public access. Various access licences in operation. Listed elsewhere in this document FI.	£1
L004	Meadow Road Allotments, Meadow Road	17.05A	Freehold	29/9/1980	None	Allotments (part) 13.42 A Leased for agriculture to N Pegrum (See Note D Below)	Utility easement handgates	£1
L007	Lower Bury Lane Allotments, Off Tower Road	0.75 Ha	Freehold	9/1/1957	None	Allotments	Pedestrian access only	£1
_008	Epping Cemetery, Bury Lane	6.328 A	Freehold	17/8/1910	Chapel			£1
L012	Ivy Chimney's Recreation Ground	0.56 Ha	Possessory title lodged	N/A	None	Adverse Possession claimed 2007	Utility easement footpath	£1

	27/4/2007. Absolute title granted Aug 2019.	Title Absolute granted after 27/4/2019. (Land Registration Act 2002 s.62.4) Granted August 2019.	
Total			£7

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF VEHICLES

FA 1 Road legal vehicles and equipment

£83,381

Description	Year of Purchase	Purchase Cost	Estimated Replacement Cost	Estimate d Current Value	Estimated Residual Life (years)	Registration Number	Inventory	/ No Estimated replacement date
Ford Tractor 2120	1996	18,400	28000	3500	1 (Repaired 2016 Life expectancy increased from 1 yr to 5)	P559 OAR	41	Max 2022
Ford Transit Connect	2010	5,560	10,000	500	0	YE56 KEJ	65	2019 (2020)
Comment: Next for replacement. 2021. Al			-	45.000				0007
Toyota Hi-lux Invincible 4X4 D-4D (s/hand 2014)	2017	16,499	17,000	15,000	6	YF64 CZP	XX	2027
*Tractor Iseki TK532 (market use)	2010	7,500	25000	3500	2	T915 JUJ	64	2023
Comment: Tractor had full service in 2018	/19 financial ye	ear, new tyres a	nd extras. This h	as extended	life expectancy. A	Iready exceeded life e	xpectancy.	
Ransomes Jacobson Highways 3 Mower	2016	21,950	29000	20000	3	EX63 VDV	XX	2024
Ford Transit Courier	2021	13,472	13,742	13,742	8	WX69 LXB	XX	2030
Total for Annual Return	1	83.381	i i					

<u>FA 2</u>	Plant Machinery and Non Road Registered Vehicles	Annual Return Value	<u>£53.913</u>
		<u>(Stonards Hill)</u>	

Equipment	Year of	Purchase	Estimate of	Estimate	Estimate	Inventory
	Purchase	Cost £	Replacement	of Current	of residual	No
			Cost £	Value £	life	

Bateson Trailer	1994	1995	3500	400	2	38
Four Way Bucket	1996	3600	6000	2000	2	41
Charterhouse Vertidrain s/h	2001	5700	19000	1500	2	46
Teleshore – Grave shoring large	2014	1737	2000	1737	5	
Teleshore – Grave shoreing small	2014	2000	2000	2000	5	
5.7KVA Generator	2002	1500	3300	800	4	48
Rabbit brushcutter	2008	4500	5000	3000	7	61
Komatsu Mini Digger (S/Hand)	2006	8500	19000	8000	4	57
Kuhn Comete Spreader	2006	1562	2000	500	2	58
Indispension 2 ton trailer	2007	1550	2000	1500	6	59
Stihl multi unit/saw/strimmer ext.	2014	1000	1000	1000	5	
Billy Goat leaf blower	2015	1090	1090	1000	5	
Rotavator	2016	1000	1000	1000	5	
Thwaites 300	2017	3000	3000	3000		
Brendon Mobile Power Washer	2017-18	2200	2200	2200		
<mark>lseki Rotary mower*</mark>	<mark>2020</mark>	<mark>7750</mark>	<mark>7750</mark>	<mark>7750</mark>		
Textron Jacobson mower	<mark>2024</mark>	<mark>10750</mark>	<mark>17500</mark>	<mark>10750</mark>		
Bunded fuel tank 2500 ltr Ston Hill	2022	2229	2672	2672		
Total for Annual Return		<mark>53913</mark>				

Nb. Items with a very low residual life may still be retained if they are useful but have deteriorated to a condition where they are potentially subject to extensive maintenance costs

*Trade in. Received £7000 as a trade in figure. Asset register price was 7750.

FA 3 Office Etc. Equipment – Epping Hall (Annual Return Value)

£9,233

Description	Insurance Category	Date of purchase	Purchase Cost £	Replacement Cost	Condition
Cooker Falcon	A	2000	1583		Good
Asber Tech Enviro 500mm Dishwasher 30A & DP	А	2020	1150		Excellent
4 drawer Fire Proof Cabinet	А	2007	1858		Good
Fujitsu fileserver	С	2015	1350		Good
Hand held radio mic system	D	2016	1051		Good
Tie clip radio mic system	D	2016	1051		Good
Macbook Air Laptop (Town Clerk)		2021	1190		Excellent
Total For Annual Return			<mark>9233</mark>		

(The above items are included in the contents insurance for Epping Hall)

FA 4 Play Equipment Etc. (Annual Return Value)

Location	Description	Purchase	Estimate of Replacement Cost £
	*includes wetpour	Cost £	(Equipment only – Wetpour and installation will
			approximately double cost)
			(All fixed items have an installation cost)
Lower Swaines (2022)	The Wizard's Hideaway house	12840	12840
	Tipi Carousel with top brace	2750	2750
	Swing frame unit	3750	3750
	Fairytale seesaw	3990	3990
	Multiplay unit	20450	20450
	Swing frame unit	3310	3310
	Mini Spacenet	11510	11510
	Cableway	7190	7190
	Cableway start station	2620	2620
	Twin ring sky carousel	2550	2550
	Bloqx 2 cube	6570	6570
	Five way swing	5030	5030
	Multigoal 8m wide	5210	5210
Parklands Coopersale (2018)	Speed gyro	2845	2845
	Small pod swing	2020	2020
	Combination swings metal	1440	1440
	Diabolo Multiplay unit	5025	5025
	Junior metal horizontal bars	1245	1245
Stonards Hill (play area)	Double junior swing	3500	3750 1535
	Double infants swing	3500	3750 1535
	Sutcliffe toddler zone unit DZW267) (2008)	13036	14000
	Sutcliffe spring seesaw TNB030)	2148	2300
	Sutcliffe nest swing SNS080)	2266	2500
	Flywheel roundabout 2022	5660	5660
	Plastic play logs 2022	10920	10920
Stonards Hill	Sutcliffe Winer Diner Picnic bench	1000	1000
	Outdoor table tennis table	1478	1478
	Outdoor gym	10500	15000
St. Hill (skateboard park)	Whiteskate concrete skate park (2007)	32248	32000
Stonards Hill tennis court	Tennis court floodlights (1992)	6386	14000
Ivy Chimneys	Multiplay*	13500	17600
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	Double junior swing 1) (1993)	3500	3750 1535
	Double Junior Swing 2)	3500	3750 1535
	Double infant swing)	3500	3750 1535
	Timber trail (2003)*	4572	4600 2933
	Mantis zipwire 2015	3569	3569
	Spinmee roundabout 2015	4105	4105
	Maliton 2015	9610	9610
I	Basket swing and seat 2015	2510	2510

£316,710

Frampton Road	Flat & cradle swing (2017)	1627	1627
	Multiplay Kiboko (2017)	9573	17600
	Football wall/basketball (2003)	1760	3156
	Basket swing (2017)	1900	1900
	DDA roundabout (2017)	5000	5000
	Adult exercise cycle (2017)	1654	1654
	Adult exercise skier (2017)	2494	2494
	Wooden train set (2017)	1069	1069
Town Greens Palmers Hill	Wooden Town Sign (2011)	1650	2000
High Road (Beech Close)	Wooden Town Sign (2014)	1800	1800
o/s Church, High St	Bus Shelter (2008)	7300	8000
Opposite Church, High St	Bus shelter (2008)	7300	8000
Palmers Hill, East side	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
Palmers Hill West side	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
The Plain, o/s St Marg H	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
The Plain near Coop'sale	Bus shelter (2012) Gifted by ECC	7300	8000
Tesco, High Street	Notice Board 2015	1010	1010
Market Store, opposite M&S	Notice Board 2015	1010	1010
Station Road	Notice Board 2015	1010	1010
Total for Annual Return		<mark>316710</mark>	

FA 5 Community Buildings

£3,986,681

Deed	Description	Tenure	Acquisiti	Uses	Value	Valuation
No.			on Date			basis
	Market Garage, R/O High Street, Epping	Freehold	2012	Storage for Market equipment	100,000	Insurance 2012
	7 Stonards Hill, Stonards Hill Recreation Ground (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Tied accommodation for Head Groundsman	117,044	Insurance 2009
	Garage, Stonards Hill Recreation Ground (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Groundsman's tool and equipment store	35,210	
	Shed, Stonards Hill Recreation Ground (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Groundsman's tool and equipment store	65,609	Insurance 2009
	Jack Silley Pavilion, Stonards Hill Rec. Grnd. (L002)	Freehold	N/A	Meeting and function rooms, changing rooms for Rec Ground	979,440	Insurance 2009
	Cemetery Chapel, Epping Cemetery, Bury Lane (L008)	Freehold	N/A	Cemetery chapel	175,983	Insurance 2009
L006	Epping Hall, St John's Road, Epping	Freehold	24/2/200 0	Meeting and function rooms, Epping Town Council Offices	1,216,900	Insurance 2009
	War Memorial	Permissive (on Epping	1922	War Memorial	650	Actual cost

	Forest Land)			(1922)
Total for Annual Return			3,986,681	

*Please note: a rebuild cost assessment was undertaken in 2019 and the details are incuded below for information. No value change for Annual Return.

FA 6 Other

Total rebuild cost

5,831,694

Civic Regalia (Mayor's Chain etc.) 2009 insurance valuation

TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS IN THIS ASSET REGISTER (FOR ENTRY TO THE ANNUAL RETURN) £4,467,960 Notes and Inventory Items Nil Value for Annual Return

The following items are noted below as a record of items which have an individual purchase value lower than £1,000 but have a considerable value on aggregate. The inventories are checked and amended on an annual basis.

Inventory No.	Locatio		Replacemer		Custodian	Check date
			value			
1	Garage, shed and			60,217	Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
	yard Sto	onards Hill	(incl 30,000			
			Christmas lig			
2		ey Pavilion		14,086	Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
3		ery Chapel		11,833		2019 then 2024
4	Market			17,002	Market Supervisor Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
5	Epping	Hall		59,339	Caretaker	2019 then 2024
					Town Clerk	
6	Minor F			57,947	Head Groundsman	2019 then 2024
		ent, Seats				
	and Bin	S				
Total Value				220,424		
	costs in		management		emolition so a whole	rebuild cost
Rebuild cost 2019		Excl VAT	Incl VAT			
1. Epping Hall		3,343,351	3,812,021		12,021	
2. 7 Stonards H	lill	175,500		210	,600	
3. Jack Silley Pa	vilion	1,740,960		2,08	39,152	
4. Garage & S	hed at	146,543		175	,851	
Stonards Hill rec						
5. Cemetery Chapel 315,900			379	,080		
6. Market store 109,440				,328		
7.—Public	toilets	209,041			,849	
(Qualis)						

6,798,032

<u>£18.035</u>

<u>10,05</u>

Rebuild cost 2024	Excl VAT	
1. Epping Hall	3,074,000	
2. 7 Stonards Hill	300,000	
3. Jack Silley Pavilion	1,777,000	
4. Garage & Shed at	202,000	
Stonards Hill rec		
5. Cemetery Chapel	1,027,000	
6. Market store	126,000	
Total rebuild cost	6,506,000	

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At Epping Town Council, we endeavour to deliver high levels of service at all times. But sometimes things go wrong. If you do have a complaint, we will do our best to resolve it for you using the procedures and guidance below.

To avoid placing less serious matters before Council, the Town Clerk must determine which complaints are minor in nature and which are serious. The Town Clerk is also responsible for trying to resolve all matters if this can be achieved. The following procedure is based on the principle that complaints will be placed before Council only after the Clerk has attempted to resolve the matter or in circumstances where the matter is clearly, in the opinion of the Clerk, a matter which relates to serious policy issues. It is also a principle of this procedure that complaints regarding the Clerk's behaviour or actions will not be handled by the Clerk but will be dealt with by Council.

1. This Policy sets out procedures for dealing with any complaints about Epping Town Council's administration, policies and procedures. A complaint may be submitted to the Town Clerk either in writing or by sending an email. In exceptional circumstances (disability, language difficulties or similar circumstances) council officers will assist complainants to make a written statement.

2. At Epping Town Council complaints are dealt with by the Town Clerk who will investigate and inform the complainant of the outcome. Complaints which the Town Clerk cannot resolve are put before full Council.

3. For all written complaints a holding reply will be sent from the Town Clerk, within five working days of receipt, unless the complaint can be dealt with in full. The complainant should be informed as soon as a decision has been made and the nature of any action to be taken has been decided. If the matter cannot be decided within twenty working days of the initial complaint received, written advice regarding the method of dealing with the matter should be given to the complainant.

4. Some complaints may return to the Town Clerk if the complainant is not satisfied with the response. The Clerk will discuss any such complaints with the Chairman of Council and will report back to Council once the Clerk is satisfied they have dealt the complaint as fully as possible and fulfilled Council's procedural and statutory obligations in relation to the complaint.

5. Where the Town Clerk receives a complaint about a Council employee, the Town Clerk will investigate and the employee will be given an opportunity to comment. The Clerk will inform the complainant of the outcome. If however the complaint is, in the view of the Clerk, of a more serious nature, the matter will be put before a dedicated meeting of Corporate Governance Advisory

Committee meeting, which will report back to Council at its next Ordinary meeting. Under the advice of the Clerk, Council will determine the substance, justification and action to be taken in response to the complainant, and additionally whether or not disciplinary action should be further considered.

6. Where the Town Clerk or Town Mayor receives a written complaint about the Town Clerk's behaviour or actions (but not relating to a decision made in accord with, or consequent upon, council's stated policy) the complaint will be considered at a dedicated meeting of the Corporate Governance meeting, which will report back to Council at its next ordinary meeting. The Town Clerk shall be given an opportunity to comment to council on the matter. For complaints against the Clerk, Council will determine the substance, justification and action to be taken in response to the complaint, and additionally whether or not a disciplinary action should be considered. Prior to a discussion of disciplinary implications, Council will consider its need to have the assistance of a qualified advisor such as a representative of the Essex Association of Local Councils.

7. The Town Clerk shall report to the next meeting of the Council (after the matter has reached a conclusion) any serious written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.

8. If a complaint is put before Council, Epping Town Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public and so recorded in minutes. The complainant should be informed as soon as a decision has been made and the nature of any action to be taken has been decided. If the matter cannot be resolved at the first meeting of Council where it is discussed, written advice regarding the method of dealing with the matter should be given to the complainant.

9. Epping Town Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

10. Complaints against Councillors should be sent to the Monitoring Officer at Epping Forest District Council **only**. If the complaint is of a serious nature, further external advice should be sought.

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974

- 1. (a) The Town Clerk is responsible for the general implementation of the Policy Statement relating to the above Act which is displayed in all Council work areas.
 - (b) The direct responsibility for the implementation of the policy delegated to all persons who have one or more persons under their control and the table below shows the staff to whom the policy relates.

	EMPLOYEES AFFECTED	RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE
Council offices Epping Hall St Johns Road Epping	All Office staff	Town Clerk
Epping Hall St Johns Road Epping	All Caretaker and Cleaning staff	Caretaker
Recreation Grounds Stonards Hill Ivy Chimneys Frampton Road Lower Swaines Brook Road	All Grounds staff	Town Supervisor
Epping Cemetery Bury Lane Epping	All Grounds staff	Town Supervisor
Epping Market High Street Epping	Market Supervisor /Market team	Town Supervisor Town Clerk
Jack Silley extension toilets	Caretaker All grounds staff	Town Supervisor

c) Areas identified as Higher Risk:

Epping Hall kitchen Epping Hall office kitchen Jack Silley Pavilion Essex Room kitchen (cooker) Bury Lane cemetery Epping Hall office

2. Instructions to be followed in event of emergency

(a) **GENERAL**

In an emergency action must be based upon common sense, care and acquaintance with instructions. It is the responsibility of all staff to familiarise themselves with the instructions which are displayed at all work areas and those contained in this book. All employees should ensure that these instructions are regularly reviewed.

- (b) FIRE
 - i) RAISE THE ALARM
 - ii) CALL FIRE BRIGADE (DIAL 999)
 Evacuate building by the approved route.
 Close all doors and windows behind you if time allows.
 IF fire is minor attempt to extinguish with nearest appliance.

DO NOT TAKE PERSONAL RISKS

- iii) Muster at assembly point and ensure all staff and members of the public have been evacuated. Await emergency services.
- iv) In the event of fire, individual instructions displayed at each work area will be followed. These show evacuation routes, location of fire appliances and telephone numbers of emergency services.

(c) INJURY

Basic first aid information and an adequate first aid box is maintained in each work area, together with the telephone number of the Ambulance Services and the local Hospital Casualty Department. The responsible employee will ensure that the box is replenished.

All accidents, both minor and major, must be reported to the Town Clerk by the responsible employee on the forms provided. Workplace accidents relating to the grounds team should be reported to the Town Supervisor in the first instance.

Incidents regarded as a 'near accident' should also be reported to the Town Clerk and recorded on the necessary forms. In the event of major injury, the Ambulance Service should be called immediately and the injured person kept warm, not moved and not given food or liquid of any kind.

(d) **ELECTRIC SHOCK**

If a person suffers an electric shock TURN OFF THE ELECTRICITY BEFORE going to their aid.

If unable to turn off electricity endeavour to move person away from live metal by

i) using piece of dry wood (e.g. broom handle); or using piece of dry cloth or rope.

OR

ii) whilst wearing dry RUBBER gloves.

iii) ensure you are

a) standing on a DRY mat or

b) standing on a DRY piece of wood

iv) inform the Electricity Provider (UK Power Networks: 0800 3163 105)

(e) GAS

Suspect leaks.

i) TURN GAS OFF - open windows.

ii) INFORM the EMERGENCY GAS HELPLINE: TEL: 0800 111 999

 $\ensuremath{\textsc{iii}}\xspace$) Do NOT use a flame to test for leaks.

iv) If you are unable to stop the gas leak evacuate the building.

(f) TRAFFIC ACCIDENT

A first aid box is maintained in all vehicles and MUST be in a prominent position. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that the box is replenished.

In the event of an accident, ambulance and police services should be informed and a full report made to the Town Clerk as soon as possible, should this be deemed necessary

Endeavour to obtain witnesses and their contact details if possible.

3. FIRST AID

The Offices, Shops and Railway Premises First Aid Order 1964: First aid boxes at each workplace should be provided.

Recreation ground, Jack Silley Pavilion, Epping Hall, Each vehicle, Market office.

- 4. To comply with existing legislation and your employer's requirements on health and safety at work all employees must:
 - a) follow the codes of practice contained in this book.
 - b) take reasonable care for the health and safety at work of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
 - c) not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare.
 - d) take care that the public is not exposed to any hazards from work processes.
- 5. Policies will be informed by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSH) as part of our statutory obligations. Policies will also reflect good/best practice and experience.
- 6. Staff should be vigilant at all times to health and safety risks. These will include, but are not limited to:
 Spillages Trip hazards Electrical appliances Heaters Plugs Lights Uneven surfaces
- 7. Staff should apply their own judgement and common sense to assist with the overall safety of everyone.
- 8. All staff must act in accordance with government guidance in relation to the coronavirus Covid 19 health situation, including the use of hand sanitiser, self isolation if appropriate, etc. Council must ensure the correct materials and equipment are available for all staff.

CARETAKING AND CLEANING STAFF

The following protective clothing is issued and must be worn.OVERALLSRUBBER GLOVESSAFETY GOGGLES

- a) Do not obstruct fire exits or access to fire fighting equipment
 b) Do not remove fire extinguishers from their locations except during tests or when needed in an emergency.
- 2. When inspecting premises (i.e. after a letting) anything found to be faulty and likely to cause a hazard **MUST** be put out of action, suitably labelled and reported to the Town Clerk.
- 3. a) When a fault is discovered on any electrical apparatus DO NOT IMPROVISE.
 - b) Hands **MUST** be dry when using electrical equipment or fittings.

c) When **NOT** in use electrical equipment must be disconnected from the Mains supply.

- 4. Care must be taken when using disinfectants and bleaching agents. After contact, thoroughly wash hands and forearms.
- 5. Disinfectants, cleaning agents etc., must **NOT** be put into unmarked containers, in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSH). Only the required quantity of chemicals should be stored and any area containing chemicals should be locked at all times.
- 6. After cleaning toilets, thoroughly wash hands and forearms especially before taking food and drink, smoking or attending to personal needs.
- 7. Cuts, scratches or grazes must be kept clean and protected with waterproof plasters.
- 8. Your work area must be kept tidy and upon leaving work all cleaning equipment must be put away in a safe place.
- 9. Do not leave spillages on the floor or buckets and brooms lying around.
- 10. When carrying equipment or materials up and down stairs one hand must be left free to hold the safety rail.
- 11. All cleaning chemicals must be kept in a locked cupboard and expiration dates monitored.
- a) All extension leads must be PAT testedb) Any equipment brought in by lettings must not be used unless PAT tested

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Protruding or badly stacked furniture.
- b) Misuse of, or faults in, electrical/mechanical equipment.
- c) Misuse of cleaning chemicals.
- d) Lost footings on steps and/or stairways.

Staff/Health & Safety Act.

OFFICE STAFF

- 1. Offices must be kept tidy.
- 2. Passages must be kept free of obstruction.
- 3. Electrical/mechanical equipment must be covered/put away when not in use and disconnected from the mains supply, where possible. Items such as the photocopier, which sits on standby, may remain plugged in. Chargers must be unplugged when not in use.
- 4. When a fault is discovered in electrical/mechanical equipment, put out of commission, suitably label and report the defect to the Town Clerk or Town Supervisor.
- 5. Electrical equipment must NOT be handled whilst your hands are wet.
- 6. Office chemicals must NOT be put into unmarked containers, in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSH).
- 7. After contact with chemicals, thoroughly wash.
- 8 Do not store unnecessary piles of paper. All paper should be filed neatly and kept well away from any electrical equipment/potential fire risk.
- 9. Please be alert to potential hazards and remove the risk, where possible, in the course of your daily operations.

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Protruding office furniture.
- b) Poor and protruding cabling
- c) Misuse of, or faults in, electrical/mechanical equipment.
- d) Misuse of office chemicals.
- e) Lost footings on steps and/or stairways.

- Fire drills must be undertaken regularly
- Periodic safety inspections should be made of all premises
- All staff must receive and acknowledge receipt of the Health & Safety Policy Staff/Health & Safety Act.

GROUNDS STAFF

Epping Town Council provide work and safety clothing and this must be worn at all times and at the direction of your line manager. This includes:

ISSUED CLOTHING: GLOVES HARD HAT SAFETY GOGGLES STEEL-TOE CAP BOOTS RUBBER BOOTS

- 1 Works depot to be locked at all times when not attended.
- 2 All machinery and tools to be put away/monitored when in use or out of the depot.
- 3 All staff must be trained before using any equipment
- 4 All staff must follow the guidance of their line manager
- 5 Any issues should be reported to your line manager
- 6 Fire extinguishers and relevant fire safety equipment should be checked regularly and kept in the appropriate locations for maximum effectiveness.
- 7 Fire exits must be labelled and kept free from obstruction at all times.
- 8 When inspecting premises (i.e. after a letting) anything found to be faulty and likely to cause a hazard **MUST** be put out of action, suitably labelled and reported to the Town Supervisor.
- 9 Electrical equipment should be PAT tested at least annually
- 10 Faulty electrical appliances should be removed from use until either tested or safely disposed of by the Town Supervisor.
- 11 Extreme care should be taken with the use and storage of chemicals and hands washed thoroughly after use
- 12 Any accidents should be reported in the accident book. This should include near misses. Any personal accidents should be attended to immediately and also recorded.
- 13 Disinfectants, cleaning agents etc, must **NOT** be put into unmarked containers, in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSH).
- 14 All cleaning chemicals must be kept in a locked cupboard and expiration dates monitored.
- 15 Your work area must be kept tidy and upon leaving work all cleaning equipment must be put away in a safe place.
- 16 Do not leave spillages on the floor or buckets and brooms lying around.
- 17 When carrying equipment or materials around, extreme care should be taken at all times
- 18 Be vigilant of your surroundings and any potential hazards at all times.

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Misuse of, or faults in, electrical/mechanical/specialist equipment.
- b) Misuse of cleaning chemicals.
- c) Protruding or badly stacked furniture.
- d) Lost footings on step, ladders.

Staff/Health & Safety Act.

CEMETERY STAFF

Epping Town Council undertake all grave digging work in Bury Lane Cemetery. Staff are trained by the Cemetery Superintendent and receive external cemetery training where necessary. Epping Town Council will respond to any additional training needs and ensure our grounds team are suitably equipped to undertake this extremely important role.

Only BRAMM registered stone masons will be permitted to work on memorial stones in Bury Lane Cemetery, to ensure best practice and high standards are adhered to.

Staff use a mini digger, shoring equipment, ladder and where necessary, dig by hand. Staff should be comfortable with the safety implications of all cemetery work and adhere to the safest practices at all times. Work undertaken includes not only grave digging, but also grass cutting, strimming, blowing and hedge maintenance.

- Graves are not left open over weekends
- Dug graves are covered
- Necessary shoring equipment is used

• Only authorised people are permitted to be near an open grave (grounds staff, undertaking team)

• Only monuments numbered on the rear by the memorial mason should be permitted to be positioned in our cemetery.

MAIN HAZARDS

- a) Open graves
- b) Graves collapsing
- c) Lost footings on slippery surfaces/poor visibility/weather
- d) Crosses
- e) Surface conditions of roads/path

Staff/Health & Safety Act.

Approved: March 2024 Next review: March 2025

Epping Town Council 2024

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

I acknowledge receipt of the Policy Statement relating to the Health and Safety at Work Acts signed by the Town Clerk.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Post:..... Location:..... (one copy of receipt retained by Town Council) (one copy of the receipt retained by employee)

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

MEDIA POLICY

Epping Town Council is committed to a strong and positive relationship with the press and media and all members of the press will be treated equally.

Copies of agendas, minutes and reports sent to members for meetings of the Council or its Committees will be e-mailed to the press and media on request (except excluded items). Facilities will be provided at meetings for the press to take notes or recordings of the proceedings.

As provided in the Council's Standing Orders, both the press and public may be excluded from a meeting whilst certain confidential matters (as provided for in the relevant legislation) are under discussion. The Town Council as a Parish Council is governed by the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

The Council will only comment on matters of fact or matters agreed at Council meetings in open session. No representations will be made on matters which are discussed in closed session, ie where press and public have been excluded under the above act.

The Town Clerk as the Proper Officer of the Council is authorised to receive all communications from the press and media and to issue press statements on behalf of the Council, if possible in consultation with members. If an urgent issue arises, the Town Clerk has delegated authority to handle those issues on behalf of Council. Other officers should refer all press and media enquiries to the Clerk for continuity.

The Council will respect the rights of individuals and others and will have particular regard to Data Protection issues when issuing press releases.

Members of the press are advised to contact the Clerk in the first instance. Councillors should refer such enquiries to the Clerk in the first instance.

In the event that councillors have direct dealings with the press on any matter which is associated with Epping Town Council, councillors will make it clear that they are issuing a personal opinion and that they are not commenting as a representative of Council or reflecting its views.

If a member has been authorised to speak on Council's behalf, they will make it clear the capacity in which they are providing the information: eg Chairman of Planning.

The Town Clerk and members of Epping Town Council may wish to put comments in writing and the press are respectfully requested to allow additional time for this.

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Epping Town Council utilises social media (Facebook and Twitter) to communicate with residents to keep them up to date with news, events and important announcements. The Council also retweets information from other organisations, which it reasonably considers may be of interest to residents. Epping Town Council only uses content and images believed to be from reputable source, which do not infringe copyright, and permissions are sought from the owner of the material before posting on social media. The Town Council has a legal duty to meet regulations of Data Protection legislation.

All social media posts will be dealt with by the Town Clerk, or under the instruction of the Town Clerk, from Council's computer/s.

Any comments made on social media should not represent or purport to represent the Town Council on the internet.

Members

Epping Town Council appreciates that social media is an important tool routinely used by members for reporting issues and news to residents in their respective wards. However, care should be exercised when reporting matters which have arisen during the course of Council meetings.

In particular, members should take care not to incorrectly report factual issues raised at meetings or misrepresent views expressed by other members. Members should also avoid any postings which may be considered vexatious, inappropriate or place the Council or another member in a bad light. This also applies to retweets and likes.

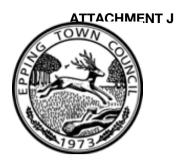
Members are reminded that postings on social media are governed by the Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with Council's Social Media policy will be treated very seriously.

Any questions regarding social media should be referred to the Town Clerk.

Social media is not continuously monitored. For any urgent enquiries, please contact Epping Town Council directly by telephone.

Approved: March 2025. Next review: Feb 2026

Epping Town Council 2025



EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

PUBLICATION SCHEME

Information published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)	Website Per A4 sheet single sided Per A4 sheet double sided	Free 10p single 15p double
This will be current information only.	Black and white not colour	
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website Hard copy on request	Free As above
Contact details for Town Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Website Hard copy on request	Free As above
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website Hard copy on request	Free As above
Staffing structure	Website Hard copy on request	Free As above
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)		
Current and previous financial year as a minimum		

Annual return form and report by auditor	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Finalised budget	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Precept	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Borrowing Approval letter	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Grants given and received	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Members' allowances and expenses	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing		
(Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)		
Current and previous year as a minimum		
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a	Website	Free
minimum)	Hard copy on request	As above
Quality status	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above

Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Class 4 – How we make decisions		
(Decision making processes and records of decisions)		
Current and previous council year as a minimum		
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and	Website	Free
parish meetings)	Hard copy on request	As above
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
	Office noticeboard	
Minutes of meetings (as above) - this will exclude information that is properly regarded as	Website	Free
private to the meeting.	Hard copy on request	As above
Reports presented to council meetings – this will exclude information that is properly	Website	Free
regarded as private to the meeting.	Hard copy on request	As above
Responses to consultation papers	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Responses to planning applications	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Bye-laws	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures		
(Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)		

Current information only		
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business	Website Hard copy on request	Free As above
Procedural standing orders		
Committee and sub-committee terms of reference		
Delegated authority in respect of officers		
Code of Conduct		
Policy statements		
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment	Website	Free
of staff:	Hard copy on request	As above
Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services		
Equality and diversity policy		
Health and safety policy		
Recruitment policies (including current vacancies)		
Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and		
operating the publication scheme)		
Information security policy	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Data protection policies	Website	Free

	Hard copy on request	As above
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Class 6 – Lists and Registers		
Currently maintained lists and registers only		
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held)	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Assets register	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests)	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Register of members' interests	Website	Free
-	Hard copy on request	As above
Register of gifts and hospitality	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Class 7 – The services we offer		
(Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)		
Current information only		
Allotments	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above

Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Community centres and village halls	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Bus shelters	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Markets	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Public conveniences	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Agency agreements	Website	Free
	Hard copy on request	As above
Services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Website	Free
(e.g. burial fees)	Hard copy on request	As above
Additional Information available		
Town magazine – Talk About Epping	From April 2023, copies available from Epping Hall and selected locations	Free
	Website	
Picture galleries of our events	Website	Free
News items	Link on website	Free

	Hard copy on request	As above
Local What's On	Website	Free
	Noticeboards, if provided	Free

Information will be published if it is available/when it becomes available. Contact details: Beverley Rumsey, Town Clerk, Epping Town Council. Tel: 01992 579444 Email: info@eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per A4 sheet single sided (black & white). 15p double A4 sheet double sided. A3 20p per sheet (black and white. Colour +10p for each category	Actual cost 10p per A4 sheet. Paper, ink, photocopier, time.
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class

Document reviewed: Corporate Governance: February 2023 Approved: Council: March 2023 Date of next review: February 2025

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Epping Town Council are very active in positive community engagement and are committed to reaching a wide audience, from all ages and backgrounds.

• Council invite our local school children to sing at events and design the Mayor's Christmas card. Council ask schools, nursery schools, local colleges and those with disabilities to work with them on specific projects and invite them to send in pictures and opinions.

AIM: To involve the community and deliver what they need. METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Liaison with teachers. Invitations. Group leaders.

• Epping Town Council produce a quarterly magazine which is available to read online. In each issue, everyone is invited to submit their views and ideas. Ideas are also invited through the website and Twitter.

• Residents are invited to make comments to Council and these are put on the Council agenda if requested and appropriate.

AIM: To provide a platform for residents to share information METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Advertisement in each edition and on website inviting contributions. Meetings are publicly advertised and comments invited.

• The Annual Town Meeting is well advertised in the town on noticeboards, the website and Twitter, where people are invited to get involved and speak. AIM: To enable residents to express their concerns to councillors and officers. METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Widely advertised, additional invitations sent out with the Annual Report.

• Epping Town Council invites the views of local teenagers and has on several occasions contacted local youth community centres and actively seek their opinions.

They have also visited the local sheltered accommodation residences, as these residents find it more difficult to get out and be involved.

AIM: To reach all groups in the community. METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Invitations to youth centres/community clubs/senior citizens' residences/groups.

In July 2014, Epping Town Council was designated as a Neighbourhood
 Planning area and one of the key elements is community engagement and
 reaching as many people and as diverse groups as possible, so they have been
 really proactive and creative in engaging people. Through this channel, the
 community collectively, have a real chance to influence planning policy.
 Council have worked with local residents for 11 years on crafting their
 Neighbourhood Plan, so it is written by them, in accordance with Localism
 principles.

AIM: To reach everyone in the community and give them the opportunity to help shape Epping's future.

METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Drop in sessions, Surveys, Questionnaires, Website and Twitter, Focus groups, Workshops, Coffee mornings, Posters in shops, pharmacies, doctors' surgeries, dentists, vets, restaurants, pubs and the local hospital; holding engagement sessions in the library, market, local park, High Street cafes, local community centres and sheltered housing; distributing information at Epping Station with details of their website and email address, to remind commuters to join in; going into the local youth community centre, schools and playgroups and inviting them to do projects, drawings and homework exercises, so their ideas form evidence to feed into the Neighbourhood Plan.

Epping Town Council actively involve everyone in the community, ensuring equality and reaching out to traditionally harder to reach groups. Our material is designed to be as engaging, accessible and helpful as possible.

• Epping Town Council have five playgrounds and before refurbishment of our playgrounds, we consult with our playground users, including neighbouring residents, children and schools. We have requested ideas and illustrations to enable us to deliver what our residents and children really want. Council

helped establish a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), facilitating partnership working with parents, to enable us to collectively obtain targeted funding for our playgrounds, so we can deliver more and better equipment. Funding applications have been worked on together. This ensured the community were fully involved in creating their facilities. Council have worked with local skate park users to design new skate park facilities, to ensure those with expert knowledge inform what is delivered and have provided the community with the skate park they wanted.

AIM: To provide excellent playgrounds, which deliver what our users want. METHOD OF ACHEIVEMENT: Close partnership working with parents, schools and residents. Developing a CIO to enable our community to drive the projects, with our support, to an excellent outcome. Listening to the views of our user groups and making them central to our projects.

• Epping Town Council consult with our residents to determine whether they would enjoy outdoor exercise equipment and other sporting facilities, such as improved tennis courts, at selected locations and respond to those requests. AIM: To provide our residents with facilities of use.

METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Surveys, posters, requests for information in our Town Magazine.

• Epping Town Council have responded to requests from our market traders to support our Monday Charter Market. This involves consultation with traders and our community; working on ideas to improve the market in terms of events and attractions and methods of support for the future. AIM: To support our current market traders, attract new traders, offer events

AIM: To support our current market traders, attract new traders, other events and attractions and provide the market with a sustainable, long-term future. METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Trader discussions, meetings, surveys, market research, requests for community input, ideas from other successful markets. In 2023, a new market website was approved to support the market.

The Town Council play a pivotal role in directing residents to the correct place for their queries and liaising with community partners and other local authorities and organisations to keep that knowledge current.
 AIM: To support residents and assist them with their issues and queries.
 METHOD OF ACHIEVEMENT: Fostering good relations with our community partners and other local authorities and organisations and residents. Engaging with other Councils, the Police and community partners to be able to share and provide information. Epping Town Council have led the Safer Epping Group and really augmented the connection with crime and safety partners in the community.

This was particularly evident during the coronavirus Covid 19 health pandemic, when Epping Town Council offered their services as a key point of contact and signpost for residents.

We continue to look at ways to improve our community engagement and will develop community surveys, if appropriate, to seek additional views. When we provide new services such as different Christmas lights, we ask residents for their views.

Approved: March 2023

Date to be reviewed: Feb 2025 Epping Town Council 2025

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

DATA PROTECTION POLICY 2025

Epping Town Council is fully committed to compliance with the requirements of Data Protection legislation. Epping Town Council followed the prescriptions of the Data Protection Act 1998 ("the Act"), which came into force on the 1 March 2000 and have adjusted their policies to reflect the new General Data Protection Regulation, with effect from 25th May 2018. The Council will therefore follow procedures that aim to ensure that all employees, elected members, contractors, agents, consultants, partners or other servants of the council who have access to any personal data held by or on behalf of the council, are fully aware of and abide by their duties and responsibilities under this legislation.

Introduction

We hold personal data about our employees, residents, suppliers and other individuals for a variety of Council purposes.

This policy sets out how we seek to protect personal data and ensure that Councillors and Officers understand the rules governing their use of personal data to which they have access in the course of their work. In particular, this policy requires Officers to ensure that the Data Protection Officer (DPO) be consulted before any significant new data processing activity is initiated to ensure that relevant compliance steps are addressed.

Business purposes	The purposes for which personal data may be used by us:
parposes	Personnel, administrative, financial, statutory and legislative purposes, payroll, consultations and business development purposes.
	Council purposes include the following: Compliance with our legal, regulatory and corporate governance obligations and good practice Gathering information as part of investigations by regulatory bodies or in connection with legal proceedings or requests Ensuring Council policies are adhered to (such as policies covering email and internet use) Operational reasons, such as recording transactions, training and quality control, ensuring the confidentiality of sensitive information, security vetting and checking Investigating complaints
	Checking references, ensuring safe working practices, monitoring and managing staff access to systems and facilities and staff absences, administration and assessments
	Monitoring staff conduct, disciplinary matters

Promoting Council services
Improving services

Personal data	Information relating to identifiable individuals, such as job applicants, current and former employees, agency, contract and other staff, clients, suppliers and marketing contacts, members of the public, Council service users, residents, market traders, hirers, correspondents
	Personal data we gather may include: individuals' contact details, educational background, financial and pay details, details of certificates and diplomas, education and skills, marital status, nationality, job title, and CV, contact details, correspondence, emails, databases, council records
Sensitive personal data	Personal data about an individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or similar beliefs, trade union membership (or non-membership), physical or mental health or condition, criminal offences, or related proceedings—any use of sensitive personal data should be strictly controlled in accordance with this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all councillors and staff. You must be familiar with this policy and comply with its terms.

This policy supplements our other policies relating to internet and email use. We may supplement or amend this policy by additional policies and guidelines from time to time. Any new or modified policy will be circulated to staff before being adopted. As the data controller, Epping Town Council has overall responsibility for dealing with any data breaches and determining the quality of our data protection. Council is ultimately responsible for the correct handling of its data, ensuring risks have been identified and proportionate measures taken to minimise those risks. The day to day management of data will be overseen by the Town Clerk in conjunction with staff and members.

• Please note: Council are not legally required to appoint a Data Protection Officer, but they are required to ensure they have the correct policies and procedures in place and protect all data. Council have resolved to monitor the situation regarding data breaches and appoint an independent Data Protection Officer, should they deem it necessary.

Our procedures

Fair and lawful processing:

We must process personal data fairly and lawfully in accordance with individuals' rights. This generally means that we should not process personal data unless the individual whose details we are processing has consented to this happening.

The Data Protection Officer's responsibilities:

- Keeping the Council updated about data protection responsibilities, risks and issues
- Reviewing all data protection procedures and policies on a regular basis
- Assisting with data protection training and advice for all staff members and those included in this policy
- Answering questions on data protection from staff, council members and other stakeholders
- Responding to individuals such as members of the public, service users and employees who wish to know which data is being held on them by Epping Town Council
- Checking and approving with third parties that handle the councils data any contracts or agreement regarding data processing
 *Please note: this will be managed by the Town Clerk as the Proper Officer of Council, in the absence of a DPO

Responsibilities of IT support:

- Ensure all systems, services, software and equipment meet acceptable security standards
- Checking and scanning security hardware and software regularly to ensure it is functioning properly
- Researching third-party services, such as cloud services the company is considering using to store or process data

Responsibilities of the officers:

- Approving data protection statements attached to emails and other marketing copy
- Addressing data protection queries from clients, target audiences or media outlets
- Coordinating with the DPO to ensure all marketing initiatives adhere to data protection laws and the company's Data Protection Policy

The processing of all data must be:

- Necessary to deliver our services
- In our legitimate interests and not unduly prejudice the individual's privacy
- In most cases this provision will apply to routine business data processing activities.

Our Terms of Business contains a Privacy Notice relating to on data protection.

The notice:

- Sets out the purposes for which we hold personal data on customers, employees, residents and service users
- Highlights that our work may require us to give information to third parties such as expert witnesses and other professional advisers
- Provides that service users and correspondents have a right of access to the personal data that we hold about them

Sensitive personal data:

In most cases where we process sensitive personal data we will require the data subject's *explicit* consent to do this unless exceptional circumstances apply, or we are required to

do this by law (e.g. to comply with legal obligations to ensure health and safety at work, comply with burial legislation and allotment legislation). Any such consent will need to clearly identify what the relevant data is, why it is being processed and to whom it will be disclosed.

Accuracy and relevance:

We will ensure that any personal data we process is accurate, adequate, relevant and not excessive, given the purpose for which it was obtained. We will not process personal data obtained for one purpose for any unconnected purpose unless the individual concerned has agreed to this or would otherwise reasonably expect this.

Individuals may ask that we correct inaccurate personal data relating to them. If you believe that information is inaccurate you should record the fact that the accuracy of the information is disputed and inform the DPO [Epping Town Council office].

Your personal data:

You must take reasonable steps to ensure that personal data we hold about you is accurate and updated as required. For example, if your personal circumstances change, please inform the Data Protection Officer so that they can update your records.

Data security:

You must keep personal data secure against loss or misuse. Where other organisations process personal data as a service on our behalf, the DPO will establish what, if any, additional specific data security arrangements need to be implemented in contracts with those third party organisations.

Storing data securely:

- In cases when data is stored on printed paper, it should be kept in a secure place where unauthorised personnel cannot access it
- Printed data should be shredded when it is no longer needed
- Data stored on a computer should be protected by strong passwords that are changed regularly. We encourage all staff to use a password manager to create and store their passwords.
- Data stored on CDs or memory sticks must be locked away securely when they are not being used
- The DPO must approve any cloud used to store data
- Servers containing personal data must be kept in a secure location, away from general office space
- Data should be regularly backed up in line with the company's backup procedures
- Data should never be saved directly to mobile devices such as laptops, tablets or smartphones
- All servers containing sensitive data must be approved and protected by security software and strong firewall.

Data retention:

We must retain personal data for no longer than is necessary. What is necessary will depend on the circumstances of each case, taking into account the reasons that the personal data was obtained, but should be determined in a manner consistent with our data retention guidelines.

Subject access requests:

Please note that under the Data Protection Act 1998, individuals are entitled, subject to certain exceptions, to request access to information held about them. Epping Town Council have a Subject Access Request Policy and Form to process any subject access requests (2019). If you receive a subject access request, you should refer that request immediately to the DPO.

Please contact the Data Protection Officer if you would like to correct or request information that we hold about you. There are also restrictions on the information to which you are entitled under applicable law. The DPO will advise on this.

Processing information in accordance with an individual's rights:

You should abide by any request from an individual not to use their personal data for direct marketing purposes and notify the DPO about any such request.

Do not send direct marketing material to someone electronically (e.g. via email) unless you have an existing business relationship with them in relation to the services being marketed.

Please contact the DPO for advice on direct marketing before starting any new direct marketing activity.

Epping Town Council will only use data for the purposes of Council business.

Training:

All staff will receive training on this policy. New joiners will receive training as part of the induction process. Further training will be provided at least every two years or whenever there is a substantial change in the law or our policy and procedure **Training is provided in-house when needed**.

It will cover:

- The law relating to data protection
- Our data protection and related policies and procedures.

Completion of training is compulsory.

GDPR and Data Protection Act provisions:

Where not specified previously in this policy, the following provisions will be in effect on or before 25 May 2018.

Privacy Notice – transparency of data protection:

Being transparent and providing accessible information to individuals about how we will use their personal data is important for our organisation. The following are details on how we collect data and what we will do with it:

Conditions for processing:

We will ensure any use of personal data is justified using at least one of the conditions for processing and this will be specifically documented. All staff who are responsible for processing personal data will be aware of the conditions for processing. The conditions for processing will be available to data subjects in the form of a privacy notice.

Justification for personal data:

We will process personal data in compliance with all six data protection principles. We will document the additional justification for the processing of sensitive data, and will ensure any biometric and genetic data is considered sensitive.

Consent:

The data that we collect is subject to active consent by the data subject. This consent can be revoked at any time.

Criminal record checks:

Any criminal record checks are justified by law. Criminal record checks cannot be undertaken based solely on the consent of the subject.

Data portability:

Upon request, a data subject should have the right to receive a copy of their data in a structured format. These requests should be processed within one month, provided there is no undue burden and it does not compromise the privacy of other individuals. A data subject may also request that their data is transferred directly to another system. This must be done for free.

Right to be forgotten:

A data subject may request that any information held on them is deleted or removed, and any third parties who process or use that data must also comply with the request. An erasure request can only be refused if an exemption applies. Please note: some data must be kept in accordance with other laws, such as cemetery records, personnel records and accident records.

Privacy by design and default:

Privacy by design is an approach to projects that promote privacy and data protection compliance from the start. The DPO will be responsible for conducting Privacy Impact Assessments and ensuring that all IT projects commence with a privacy plan.

When relevant, and when it does not have a negative impact on the data subject, privacy settings will be set to the most private by default.

International data transfers:

No data may be transferred outside of the EEA without first discussing it with the data protection officer. Specific consent from the data subject must be obtained prior to transferring their data outside the EEA.

Data audit and register:

Regular data audits to manage and mitigate risks will inform the data register. This contains information on what data is held, where it is stored, how it is used, who is responsible and any further regulations or retention timescales that may be relevant.

Sharing of data:

Sharing of data with any third parties is not permitted without the express permission in writing of the data subject. Extreme caution should be taken with all data sharing.

Reporting breaches:

All members of staff have an obligation to report actual or potential data protection compliance failures. Data breaches **MUST** be reported to the Town Clerk as soon as they become apparent. This allows us to:

- Investigate the failure and take remedial steps if necessary
- Follow the Data Breach Procedure
- Maintain a register of Compliance Failures
- Notify the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) of any compliance failures that are material either in their own right or as part of a pattern of failures

Please refer to our Compliance Failure Policy for our reporting procedure.

Monitoring:

Everyone must observe this policy. The DPO has overall responsibility for this policy. They will monitor it regularly to make sure it is being adhered to.

Compliance:

It is extremely important that everyone holding data in relation to the operations of Epping Town Council complies with this policy.

If you have any questions or concerns about anything in this policy, do not hesitate to contact the DPO. ***Please note:** In the absence of a DPO, this is the Town Clerk as the Proper Officer of the Council.

What information is being collected?	
Who is collecting it?	
How is it collected?	
Why is it being collected?	
How will it be used?	
Who will it be shared with?	
Identity and contact details of any data controllers	
Details of transfers to third country and safeguards	
Retention period	

Approved: March 2023 Next review: Feb 2025

Epping Town Council 2025

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

Compliance Failure Policy (Data)

Epping Town Council treat personal data very seriously and adhere to our Data Protection Policy. We only collect data to be able to communicate with our residents in order to deliver services and functions. We would never knowingly share information for any other purpose.

Epping Town Council hold specialist cyber insurance to reflect the importance of Data Protection and to manage any concerns.

If you feel we have not adhered to our Data Protection obligations and compromised your data, please fill in the Data Complaint Form below.

Your complaint will be dealt with as follows:

- 1) Complaint made in writing using the form below and submitted to DPO, Epping Town Council, Epping Hall, St Johns Road, Epping, Essex.CM16 5JU or emailed to <u>info@eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk</u> marked Data Protection.
- 2) Complaint referred to DPO (Town Clerk or an assigned Data Protection Officer) and they will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days
- DPO will gather evidence and response to your complaint within 28 working days (reporting your complaint to the Information Commissioner's Officer (ICO) if appropriate
- 4) DPO will advise you of the outcome
- 5) Any further necessary steps will be taken, as advised by the ICO.

Further information:

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which your complaint has been handled or the outcome from your complaint then you may write outlining your concerns to the DPO where an Independent member will review your concerns and respond within 28 working days.

If you remain dissatisfied you may forward your complaint to: Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane GDPR Data Complaints Policy Page 5 of 7 Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF Further information can be found at <u>https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/</u>

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

Compliance Failure Policy (Data)

Data Complaint Form

1) YOUR DETAILS

Name:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Date:

2) NATURE OF YOUR COMPLAINT (Please tick as applicable)

- No response to a data subject access request (SAR)
- Inaccurate information held by the organisation
- Disclosure of your personal information to a third party (please state third party)
- Use of email/SMS/phone for unauthorised marketing
- Use of photograph for unauthorised marketing
- Other

3) MORE DETAILS

Please provide more details of your complaint. (Please use overleaf if necessary.)

Please also provide any relevant emails or evidence.

Approved: March 2023 Next review: Feb 2025

Epping Town Council 2025