

**MINUTES** of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING** held in the Conference Room, Epping Hall on **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 8pm.**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr Janet Whitehouse	(Town Mayor & Chair)	
Cllr R Sharif	(Deputy Town Mayor)	
Cllr N Avey	Cllr C Burgess	Cllr L Burrows
Cllr C McCredie	Cllr H Pegrum	Cllr G Scruton
Cllr H Whitbread	Cllr Jon Whitehouse	Cllr M Wright

**OFFICER:** Jo-Ann Lewis (Planning, Market & Events Officer)

**425 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J Duffell and Cllr Jon Whitehouse for lateness.

**426 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**427 DISPENSATIONS**

There were no dispensations.

**428 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions or comments.

**429 CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 377: Dementia Fair was 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026 not 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

**430 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

It was **RESOLVED** that the signed Minutes of the following Committee meetings be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by the Council, subject to the following amendment:

Planning minutes, 10<sup>th</sup> February, 33 Chapel Road, CM15 5DS  
EPF no should be EPF/0124/26 not EPF/2564/25

Planning & General Purposes Committee	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	<b>(Attachment B)</b>
Planning & General Purposes Committee	24 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	<b>(Attachment C)</b>
Corporate Governance Advisory Committee	24 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	<b>(Attachment D)</b>

**431 COMMUNICATIONS TO NOTE/REQUIRING DECISION**

**(i) JACK SILLEY PAVILION POTENTIAL SUBSIDENCE**

Council **NOTED** the communications regarding the Jack Silley Pavilion’s potential subsidence which has been deemed thermal shrinkage and movement from a dry summer, rather than subsidence.

**(ii) 50 FAVOURITE TREES OF EPPING FOREST**

Council **CONSIDERED** the request from Epping Forest District Council, as per **Attachment E**, requesting nominations for favourite trees of Epping Forest.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Councillors would consider this and return to the office team with any recommendations.

**(iii) NORTH WEALD BASSETT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Council **CONSIDERED** the Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Consultation version of North Weald Bassett’s Neighbourhood Plan.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) No formal comments would be returned but Epping Town Council would respond with their appreciation for being asked.

**432 TOWN MAYOR & DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR’S DUTIES**

The duties undertaken by the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor since the Ordinary Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were **NOTED**, with the following additions:

Town Mayor	Dementia café, Epping Library	5 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Deputy Town Mayor:	Meeting with French journalist	16 <sup>th</sup> February 2026

**433 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS**

Reports from members were received on meetings or visits since the Ordinary Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026:

Cllr C McCredie	Ace Event	11 <sup>th</sup> February 26
	Princess Alexandra Hospital presentation	26 <sup>th</sup> February 26
	Tree planting	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 26
	Jack Silley Pavilion activity session	4 <sup>th</sup> March 26
	Weald Hall care home library	5 <sup>th</sup> March 26
Cllr H Pegrum	Safer Epping	9 <sup>th</sup> March 26
	Theydon Trusts meeting	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 26
Cllr H Whitbread	Uniquely Me Show	7 <sup>th</sup> March 26
Cllr L Burrows	Uniquely Me Show	7 <sup>th</sup> March 26
Cllr C Burgess	Rotary Literacy Trail Short Story Comp	March 26
Cllr G Scruton	Councillor surgery	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 26
	Theydon Trusts meeting	3 <sup>th</sup> March 26

**434 REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND COUNCILLORS QUESTIONS**

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

**435 REPORTS FROM EPPING FOREST DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS****Epping Forest District Council****Cllr H Whitbread**

EFDC budget and costs supported.

**436 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 28th FEBRUARY 2026**

Council considered the summary financial report for February 2026, presented by Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and **APPROVED**;
- (ii) No further action was required at the current time.

**437 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Council's Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton presented the payment schedules for February 2026 totalling £64,091.96 (Barclays: £75.75, The Co-operative £63,885.69 & The Co-operative online £130.52).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- (ii) The list of payments for February 2026 were **APPROVED** as presented in the schedule.

**438 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Corporate Governance Advisory Committee met on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026 (Minutes #400-416 of 2025/26 refer) and made the following **RECOMMENDATIONS**:

- (i) Epping Town Council's Standing Orders should be **APPROVED**, with amendments ~~(Attachment B)~~;
- (ii) Epping Town Council's Financial Regulations should be **APPROVED**, with amendments ~~(Attachment C)~~;
- (iii) The Internal Risk Register with additions should be **APPROVED** by Council; ~~(Attachment D)~~;
- (iv) The Asset Register 2026, ~~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;
- (vi) The Health & Safety Policy, with no amendments (~~Attachment F~~) but with the additional 3 policies added as Appendices should be APPROVED as policies of Council (Fitness for Work, No Smoking, No Alcohol and Drugs policies);
- (vii) The Insurance policies & reconciliation would be brought to Council in advance of the July 2026 meeting;
- (viii) The new draft IT policy (Attachment G) should be APPROVED as a working draft, and brought back to Committee/Council for any future amendments;
- (ix) The insurance renewal 2026 should be considered in June 2026 in advance of the July 2026 renewal;
- (x) The Town Clerk should work towards Cyber Essentials (increased security relating to Council's cyber insurance);
- (xi) Any staff matters should be brought to Committee at point of need (rather than as a standard item);

**Please note:** following advice from the auditor regarding the frequency of policy document reviews (Minute #420(i) of 2024/25), the **RECOMMENDATION** is as follows:

The Town Clerk would issue the list of policy documents to Council annually (at the Annual Council meeting), so all members have a summary of the policies in place and their review dates (Policy and Governance Document Review March 2025). (Now March 2026).

The policies would be reviewed at Corporate Governance or the Annual Council meeting (as appropriate) in the first Civic year of each Council, unless legislation requires sooner. **Please note:** some policies are more appropriately reviewed at Annual Council eg Code of Conduct and others through Corporate Governance.

**Please note:** documents or excerpts from the documents where changes have been made were included as per **Attachment K**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) **The statutory basis for this item be NOTED as the** Local Government Act 1972, sch 12, 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
- (ii) All **RECOMMENDATIONS** of the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee meeting, as detailed above, were **APPROVED** by Council.

**439 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT: 2<sup>ND</sup> INTERIM**

Council internal auditor undertook their second auditing work for the 2025/26 financial year on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026 and their report was provided as per **Attachment L**. There were no recommendations.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- (ii) No further action was required at the current time;
- (iii) The staff should be thanked for achieving a clean audit at this time.

**440 ASSERTION 10 AUDIT REQUIREMENTS (AGAR)**

Council **CONSIDERED** the information and **RECOMMENDATIONS** relating to the new Assertion 10 audit requirements for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- (ii) All 4 **RECOMMENDATIONS** in Attachment M were **APPROVED**;
- (iii) Data retention policy: Insurance documents kept indefinitely;
- (iv) Data retention policy: Deeds/leases, etc kept indefinitely (for consistency).

**441 PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Council **CONSIDERED** the professional membership information.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government 1972, s111;
- (ii) Epping Town Council would affiliate to EALC (and NALC) for the 2026/27 financial year;
- (iii) Epping Town Council would affiliate to the new CouncilWise for the 2026/27 financial year.

**442 EPPING TOWN COUNCIL GRANT APPLICATIONS: MARCH 2026**

Council **CONSIDERED** the grant applications, as per **Attachment N**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s133 & s145;
- (ii) No grants would be awarded under this item this time.

**443 CHRISTMAS MARKET 2026**

Council **CONSIDERED** the information about Epping Christmas Market 2026, as per **Attachment O**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s145;
- (ii) The Christmas Market would be held on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2026, with times to be decided;
- (iii) The quality, mix and layout of stalls would be considered in the planning process for the Christmas market.

**444 ART AND CULTURE AWARD**

Council **CONSIDERED** the Art and Culture Award information, as per **Attachment P**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s145;
- (ii) The Christmas Market would be held on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2026, with times to be decided;
- (iii) Nominations would be sought between September and January each year;
- (iv) Any awards would be presented at the Civic Reception each year.

**445 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.

**446 COMMUNITY AWARD**

Council **CONSIDERED** the Community Award information and potential candidates, as per **Attachment Q**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Local Government Act 1972, s111;
- (ii) The Community Award was chosen and this would be awarded at the Mayor’s Civic Reception 2026.

**CLOSURE**

The Town Mayor, Cllr Janet Whitehouse, closed the meeting at **9.22pm**.

**Signature of Chairman**  
**Date**