

MINUTES of the **ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING** held in the Conference Room, Epping Hall, on **Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 8pm.**

PRESENT:

Cllr C McCredie (Former Town Mayor)	
Cllr Janet Whitehouse (Town Mayor from Item 1)	
Cllr N Avey	Cllr C Burgess
Cllr J Duffell	Cllr H Pegrum
Cllr R Sharif	Cllr Jon Whitehouse
Cllr M Wright	

OFFICER: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: 5 members of the public, 1 member of the press.

1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

It was proposed by Cllr Jon Whitehouse that Cllr Janet Whitehouse be nominated for the office of Town Mayor for the 2025-26 municipal year. This was seconded by Cllr C Burgess.

There being no other nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Janet Whitehouse be elected as Town Mayor for the 2025-26 municipal year.

The retiring Town Mayor, Cllr C McCredie, invested Cllr Janet Whitehouse with the Mayoral Chain of Office.

Cllr Janet Whitehouse read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Town Mayor and this document was countersigned by the Town Clerk.

Town Mayor Cllr Janet Whitehouse in the Chair.

2. RETIRING TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES AND REPORTS

The retiring Town Mayor Cllr C McCredie's report on her year in office was **NOTED**.

Council **NOTED** that duties undertaken by the Town Mayor for the period 9th April - 12th May 2025, both as per **Attachment A**.

The retiring Town Mayor Cllr C McCredie was presented with her past Town Mayor's badge by the incoming Mayor, Cllr Janet Whitehouse.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr G Scruton, Cllr L Burrows and Cllr H Whitbread.

4. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

It was proposed by Cllr C Burgess that Cllr Razia Sharif be nominated for the office of Deputy Town Mayor for the 2025-26 municipal year. This was seconded by Cllr M Wright.

There being no other nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Razia Sharif be elected as Deputy Town Mayor for the 2025-26 municipal year.

Cllr Razia Sharif read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Deputy Town Mayor and this document was countersigned by the Town Clerk.

5. RETIRING DEPUTY MAYOR'S REPORT AND DUTIES

The retiring Deputy Town Mayor Cllr Janet Whitehouse's report on her year in office was **NOTED**.

Council **NOTED** that duties undertaken by the Retiring Deputy Town Mayor for the period 9th April - 12th May 2025, both as per **Attachment B**.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr L Burrows, Cllr R Sharif, Cllr H Whitbread, Cllr Janet Whitehouse & Cllr Jon Whitehouse declared a non-pecuniary interest as Epping Forest District Councillors. Cllr H Whitbread is an EFDC Cabinet member.

Cllr H Whitbread declared an additional non-pecuniary interest as an Essex County Councillor.

7. DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION — QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions or comments.

9. CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL MINUTES

Council **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 8th April 2025 be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by Council.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & General Purposes Committee dated 8th April 2025 and the minutes of the Planning & General Purposes Committee dated 22nd April 2025, be signed by the Mayor as a true record and adopted by Council.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

(i) Communications from the Town Mayor:

None

(ii) Communications from the Town Clerk:

The Town Clerk advised Council about the cables under Stonards Hill recreation ground, the required works to the cemetery pipes, the assistant groundsperson vacancy, the blue plaque for Church's butchers and the status of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Town Clerk provided some information on Council's membership to the Essex Association of Local Councils, as per **Attachment F1**, which was **NOTED** by Council.

12. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr R Sharif	Civic Reception Residents meeting re S Epping	25 th April 2025 2 nd May 2025
Cllr Jon Whitehouse	Civic Reception Epping Fire Station Open Day VE Day 80 beacon lighting	25 th April 2025 3 rd May 2025 8 th May 2025
Cllr H Pegrum	Civic Reception VE Day 80 beacon lighting	25 th April 2025 3 rd May 2025
Cllr J Duffell	VE Day 80 meeting Civic Reception VE Day 80 beacon lighting	22 nd April 2025 25 th April 2025 3 rd May 2025
Cllr C Burgess	Civic Reception Swaines Green May Fayre Safer Epping meeting	25 th April 2025 10 th May 2025 12 th May 2025
Cllr N Avey	Procedural meeting N Plan	30 th April 2025

13. KEY MEMBERS & APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

(i) Key members & appointments to Committees

It was **RESOLVED** that Council's Key Members and appointments to Standing Committees to be as follows for the 2025-26 year:

Key Members:

Administration:	Cllr N Avey
Cemetery:	Cllr H Pegrum
Epping Hall and Jack Silley Pavilion:	Cllr H Pegrum
Events:	Cllr R Sharif
Finance:	Cllr G Scruton
Market:	Cllr M Wright
Rec Grounds & Outside Services:	Cllr J Duffell

(The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are ex officio Members of all Committees)

Planning & General Purposes Committee:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Cllr N Avey (Chairman) | 2. Cllr M Wright (Vice-Chairman) |
| 3. Cllr C Burgess | 4. Cllr C McCredie (Town Mayor) |
| 5. Cllr G Scruton | |

(Cllr J Duffell would stand in if
non quorate, if unavailable
this would be Cllr R Sharif)

Corporate Governance Advisory Committee: (minute #45 of 05/06 refers)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Cllr R Sharif
(Chairman & Deputy Mayor) | 2. Cllr N Avey
(Administration Key Member) |
| 3. Cllr G Scruton (Finance Key Member) | 4. Town Clerk/RFO (Non voting member)
(Mayor if not quorate) |

Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Committee:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Cllr N Avey (Chairman) | 2. Cllr M Wright (Vice-Chairman) |
| 3. Cllr C McCredie | 4. Cllr R Sharif |

Discipline/Grievance Committee:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 Cllr N Avey (Chairman) | 2. Cllr C McCredie | |
| 3. Cllr C Burgess | 4. Cllr R Sharif | 5. Cllr M Wright |

Appeals Committee: (members must be different to those on the Discipline & Grievance Committee:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Cllr J Duffell | 2. Cllr H Pegrum |
| 3. Cllr G Scruton | 4. Cllr Jon Whitehouse |

Joint Standards Committee:

1. Deputy Mayor (ex officio)
2. Substitute: Key Member for Finance (ex officio)

Task & Finish Personnel Committee: (Town Clerk recruitment)

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Cllr C Burgess (Chairman) | 2. Cllr H Pegrum |
| 3. Cllr Jon Whitehouse | 4. Cllr M Wright |

Market Committee:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Cllr M Wright (Chairman) | 2. Cllr C Burgess |
| 3. Cllr C McCredie | 4. Cllr N Avey |

5. Cllr H Pegrum

Action Plan Working Party:

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Cllr J Duffell | 2. Cllr H Pegrum | 3. Cllr G Scruton |
| 4. Cllr Jon Whitehouse | | |

Playground and Recreation Grounds Working Party:

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Cllr N Avey | 2. Cllr C Burgess | 3. Cllr C McCredie |
| 4. Cllr H Pegrum | 5. Cllr G Scruton | 6. Cllr Jon Whitehouse |
| 7. Cllr M Wright | 8. Cllr J Duffell | |

Safer Epping:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Cllr C McCredie (Chairman) | 2. Cllr G Scruton |
| 3. Cllr C Burgess | 4. Cllr Janet Whitehouse |

Budget Working Party:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Cllr H Pegrum | 2. Cllr G Scruton |
| 3. Cllr J Whitehouse | 4. Cllr M Wright |

Epping Hall Working Party:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Cllr N Avey | 2. Cllr C Burgess | 3. Cllr H Pegrum |
| 4. Cllr G Scruton | 5. Cllr Jon Whitehouse | |

Expressions of Interest Groups**Climate & Environmental Awareness Policy**

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Cllr C Burgess | Cllr C McCredie | Cllr G Scruton |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|

14 **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Council **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed to serve on Outside bodies for the 2025-26 municipal year:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Local Councils' Liaison Committee: | Cllr Janet Whitehouse (Mayor) |
| Essex Association of Local Councils: | Cllr Janet Whitehouse (Mayor) |
| Larger Local Councils: | Cllr Janet Whitehouse (Mayor) |
| Friends of Swaines Green: | Cllr Jon Whitehouse & Cllr N Avey |
| Royal British Legion - Epping Branch: | Cllr J Duffell |

Epping/Eppingen Association:	Town Mayor
Epping Society:	Cllr C Burgess
Theydon Trust:	Cllr H Pegrum, Cllr N Avey & Cllr G Scruton
<i>(As representatives and shareholders to this organisation (Minute #5 2007/08 refers) for the life of this Council. No other councillor will be involved in any capacity with Theydon Trust Limited during this period except by Formal Resolution of Council following consultation with Theydon Trust's Officers.)</i>	
Trustee of Epping Forest Band:	Town Clerk
Epping Horticultural Society:	Cllr M Wright
Epping in Bloom	Cllr C McCredie
Area Rep to ECC on Public Transport:	Cllr Janet Whitehouse
Epping Forest Countrycare:	Cllr C Burgess & Cllr C McCredie
Theydon Bois United Charities:	Cllr Janet Whitehouse
Friends of St Margaret's Hospital	Cllr N Avey
Epping & Theydon Garnon Charities: (3)	
Cllr H Pegrum, Cllr G Scruton & Cllr Janet Whitehouse: From May 2023 to 2027	
Community Safety Partnership	Cllr C McCredie
Epping Forest Local Authorities Liaison	Town Mayor
<i>(Please note: Epping Senior Citizens' Association & Epping Town Partnership were deleted)</i>	

15 **RECORD OF COUNCILLOR'S ATTENDANCES**

Council **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the record of councillors' attendances from 14th May 2024 to 22nd April 2025.

16 **REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES**

Council **RESOLVED** that the Terms of Reference for Committees be approved as presented in **Attachments J to Q**, with two amendments to **Attachment Q**.

- (i) Delete market working party becoming a committee;
- (ii) Delete the last eight words of the final paragraph.

17 **REVIEW OF DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS**

Council **RESOLVED** that the operational delegation arrangements for the Town Clerk be approved as presented in **Attachment R**.

18 AUTHORISATION OF SIGNATORIES

Council **RESOLVED** that those Members authorised to sign for payments on behalf of Council for the ensuing year to be Cllr H Pegrum, Cllr G Scruton, Cllr M Wright and Cllr C Burgess (to be added) (Barclays Bank). B Rumsey can transact on the account but not sign.

Council **RESOLVED** that those Members authorised to sign for payments on behalf of Council for the ensuing year to be Cllr H Pegrum, Cllr G Scruton, Cllr M Wright and Cllr C Burgess (to be added) (Cooperative Bank – main account and online account). B Rumsey & K Harrigan can transact on the accounts but not sign.

Council **RESOLVED** that those Members authorised to transact on the Nationwide Investment for the ensuing year to be Cllr H Pegrum, Cllr M Wright and B Rumsey (as Town Clerk & RFO).

**19 COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2023-2027 (INTERIM MAY 2025)
COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN 2023-27 (INTERIM MAY 2026)**

Council considered the updated Action Plan 2023-2027 and the updated Forward Plan 2023-27 (APPROVED on 12th November 2024, Minute #286 of 2024/25).

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The updated Action Plan 2023-27, as per **Attachment S**, be **APPROVED** as the current working draft;
- (ii) The updated Forward Plan 2023-27, as per **Attachment S1**, be **APPROVED** as the current working draft;
- (iii) Meetings of the Action Plan working party should take place in autumn (pre budget setting) and spring (post budget setting) to inform the budget setting process and monitoring.

20 CODE OF CONDUCT

Council considered Epping Town Council's Code of Conduct, as per **Attachment T**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Epping Town Council REAPPROVED the Local Government Association's (LGA) Code of Conduct (previously re-approved at the Annual Council meeting on 14th May 2024, Minute #20 of 2024/25), as per **Attachment T**.

21 CYCLE OF MEETINGS 2025/26

Council discussed the Cycle of Meetings, as per **Attachment U**.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Epping Town Council's Cycle of Meetings was **NOTED** (as had previously been APPROVED).

CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr Janet Whitehouse closed the meeting at **8.35pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date