

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

**EPPING TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD
AT EPPING HALL, ST JOHNS ROAD, EPPING CM16 5JU
ON THURSDAY, 1st MAY 2025 AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT: Town Councillors:, C McCredie (Town Mayor), Janet Whitehouse (Deputy Mayor),
N Avey, C Burgess, J Duffell, H Pegrum, G Scruton, R Sharif.

OFFICERS: Miss B Rumsey (Town Clerk, Epping Town Council)
Mrs J Lewis (Planning & Events Officer, Epping Town Council)

One member of the press and 18 members of the public were present.

531 OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Town Clerk, Miss B Rumsey welcomed residents to the meeting and announced housekeeping information. The Town Clerk handed over to the Town Mayor, Cllr C McCredie who introduced each of the Town Councillors individually and explained the format for the meeting.

532 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Wright, Cllr L Burrows, Cllr H Whitbread and Cllr Jon Whitehouse.

533 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9th May 2024

NOTED that the minutes of the above meeting were submitted to an Ordinary meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday, 11th June 2024 and appropriate action had been taken where necessary. The meeting approved the minutes, and the Mayor signed the minutes as a correct record.

534 ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

The Annual Report for 2024/25 was received. The Town Mayor advised the meeting that any questions would be taken under agenda item 11 Open Forum.

535 REPORT FROM THE TOWN MAYOR (Cllr C McCredie)

Epping Town Council are a busy Town Council who look after many different aspects of Epping life, including six recreation grounds, five playgrounds, two allotment sites, two public halls, Bury Lane cemetery, Epping's Historic Monday Charter Market, the Town Show, Christmas Market, Talk About Epping magazine, Epping War Memorial, Bakers Lane public toilets and Epping's Christmas lights.

Stonards Hill recreation ground skate park

This year, we are delighted to have been able to deliver the new skate park at Stonards Hill recreation ground costing £145,000, which was all externally funded. £30,000 came from Section 106 (developers' money) for green spaces from Qualis. £115,000 came from the National Lottery. We know the new facility is being very well used by experienced skaters and younger fans on bikes and scooters.

Blue plaques

Epping Town Council are also delighted to be able to consider blue plaque requests and deliver these important historical records. We currently have 11 blue plaques and are working on one for Church's Butchers. The scheme is a national scheme, and it has been running for many years. Nomination details are available on Epping Town Council's website.

Monday Market

Epping Monday Market remains an important part of the Town Council's operations, and we thank our loyal traders for their hard work for our Market in all weathers.

Planning

Epping Town Council's Planning Committee consider every planning, tree and licensing application in Epping Parish and return comments to Epping Forest District Council as the Local Planning Authority, to ensure local knowledge is present in decision making.

Neighbourhood Planning

Epping's Neighbourhood Plan is currently with the Planning Inspector instructed by Epping Forest District Council, and Epping Town Council will be advised when it goes to public referendum and examination.

Epping War Memorial

Epping Town Council look after Epping's 104-year-old listed war memorial on behalf of the Town, undertaking periodic repairs and cleaning, but only when necessary to protect its precious materials.

Town Awards

The Town Council loves to recognise those who have made an outstanding contribution to Epping life, and we present a number of awards to recognise and thank individuals and groups. These include the Allotment Awards, Townsperson of the Year, Young Townsperson of the Year and Community Group.

We also have an award scheme for a new build or sensitively refurbished building, which was judged on an annual basis. This process has been changed, and you can nominate a building whenever you see one. Just send your nomination into Epping Town Council and they will be considered on receipt, no longer just once a year.

Town Show and Christmas Market

Highlights of Epping Town Council's calendar are the Annual Town Show and Christmas Market. Both events bring the Town together in terms of our residents, visitors, local community organisations and local businesses. Preparations for the Town Show in July are well underway, and we hope the weather will be kinder in 2025 and allow the Christmas Market on Saturday 6th December 2025.

VE Day 80th commemorations

We are only one week away from our beacon lighting event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day on Thursday 8th May 2025. The programme of events will start at the Hemnall Social Club from 7pm, culminating in the lighting of a beacon in the Fire Station Yard at 9.30pm and then back into the Social Club for live music. We hope to see you there.

Financial support and grants

Epping Town Council provide a financial contribution to support Epping in Bloom with their planting work and also pay for other key things in the town, such as the Pipe Band for Remembrance Sunday.

We have recently reintroduced our grant scheme to help community groups, and these will be considered twice a year (deadlines 1st September and 1st March each year).

We have also established a new start up grant for those wanting to test a new business at one of our two halls (Epping Hall and the Jack Silley Pavilion).

All grants will be considered on a case by case basis.

Employer

Epping Town Council is an employer of fifteen members of staff, who are managed by the Town Clerk or Proper Officer. Council takes its responsibilities as a good employer very seriously and trains and supports its workforce to be able to deliver the many things we do for the town. The fifteen members of staff are split between the office team, the grounds team and the caretaking team and while three teams, they all work together for the good of Epping.

Finances

The Town Council monitor their spending very carefully and provide many vital services and functions for the Town. More detailed information on the Town Council finances is featured in the Annual Report and if you have any financial questions, our Key Member for Finance, Cllr Grahame Scruton and our Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Beverley Rumsey, will do their best to answer them.

In conclusion...

I am very proud to have been elected Town Mayor for the 2024/25 Civic Year, and this is my last formal Council meeting before the new Mayor is elected on Tuesday 13th May 2025. As Town Mayor and Chairman, I Chair Council meetings and I know how hard everyone here works for the benefit of the Town. Thank you to my fellow Town councillors and our excellent team of staff for their ongoing hard work, loyalty and commitment.

Before we move onto the next item, I would like to draw your attention to the wonderful artwork from St John's School for our VE Day project. The art work will be on display at our beacon lighting event next Thursday 8th May but do go and have a look at it after the meeting. A big thank you to the students at St John's for these pieces.

536 REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING & NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING (Cllr N Avey)

Madam Mayor, Fellow Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen Thank you.

My role is to chair the Town Council's Planning and Neighbourhood Planning Committees.

You will hopefully have read my commentary on the work of both these committees in the Annual Report. I won't therefore go through the detail again but add some brief highlights or lowlights by way of observation.

We have dealt with a considerable number of applications this year, including licence applications which also fall to the Committee to decide. Most are uncontroversial, but we have seen some which warrant a strong objection from the Committee, which are passed up to the District Council.

The Committee welcomes the involvement of residents whose views often guide us to a decision.

Once again, we are faced with applications where the developer wants to demolish a current building to squeeze new buildings onto the site. While this may in some cases not be problematic in others it is. Residents are rightly resistant to new developments, which significantly alter the street scene or in one recent case in Lindsay Street mean the loss of a characterful house with historic connections to the Town.

I have said publicly on a number of times before that the Town does face development challenges in the future. Many residents are against the development in South Epping. However, this may not be the last large development which is planned.

Developers have bought up large swathes of Green Belt around the Town and will try, when the Local Plan is reviewed, to develop that land. You will hear tonight from a residents' group who are fighting to protect a beautiful and environmentally rich area of land known as Mill

Mound Fields near the centre of the Town. I hope residents will mobilise to say "no" to any further large developments close to the Town.

On a related note, I can report that after a decade of work and a lot of waiting, the Neighbourhood Plan is currently under review by an Inspector appointed by the District Council. Once her examination is complete, we hope the Neighbour Plan can go to a local referendum and be adopted. Thank you.

537 REPORT FROM THE KEY MEMBER FOR FINANCE (Cllr Grahame Scruton)

I have served as Council's Key Member for Finance and have been for the last 11 years. I work closely with the Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer on the monitoring of Epping Town Council's income, expenditure and reserves. As a Council, we provide quite a number of services and functions on behalf of you the residents. A list of those can be seen in the annual report.

In order to manage these efficiently the council set a budget each January for the forthcoming financial year (April to the following March). We determine the likely costs of providing these services and functions, assess our likely income from hall hires and services provided, and the balance is then requested and received via Epping Forest District Council from a share of your council tax.

The budget is set after very careful consideration, and we do our utmost to adhere to it throughout the year. We consider we provide good value for money for residents and this year, we increased our request from EFDC, known as the precept, by 2% for the 2024/25 financial year to help with increased costs. This equates to £2.37 per annum for those living in a band D equivalent property (a standard family home).

During 2024, we delivered a new skate park at Stonards Hill recreation ground. Regular skate park users have been asking the council for a new skate park for a while as the existing one, dating from 2007, had become old and in poor condition and surface problematic. In terms of repair, Council advised that given the significant cost external funding would be required. The skate park is used by not only skaters but also many smaller children with bikes and scooters, so we asked these groups to help us design a skate park that could be enjoyed by all the existing groups. The skate park cost £145,000 and it was all delivered by external funding; £115,000 from the National Lottery and £30,000 from Qualis via their S106 monies towards green spaces. This was an amazing achievement, and it meant we didn't have to find money for this project from residents.

Throughout the year Council and its staff work tirelessly to ensure the budget is adhered to. I report to council each month on income and expenditure and how the council is performing against budget. For all the time I have been Key Member for Finance we have finished the year pretty much on budget for which the staff and particularly the Town Clerk and Senior Finance Officer should be commended, thank you.

538 PRESENTATION OF TOWN AWARDS

- (i) Best kept allotment 2024: Meadow Road –Mr D Thorneycroft.
- (ii) Best kept allotment 2024: Lower Bury Lane –Mr G Hobin.
- (iii) Civic Award Procedure.

Both allotment winners will receive a certificate and £25 cheque. The Town Mayor stated that this award was made in recognition for the very high standard of cultivation of an allotment.

Neither of the winners were present on the evening.

- (i) **Asset of Community Value: Mill Mound Fields.**
Lucy Gysbers and colleague Norman, both residents' representatives for this area gave a presentation on the ecological benefits of this area and request for support in preserving it as an Asset of Community Value.

- (ii) **Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation:**
From the Essex Association of Local Councils.

Presentations from Charlene Slade CEO, Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) and Cllr Mike Eldred (Chair of the EALC) were given on the process and possible timeframe for Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

Questions from (ii) Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation came from Tim Valder-Hogg; would planning control be lost to the higher authority and how would the Neighbourhood Plan be affected? How many unitary authorities will be put in place and what would be the timescale for elections along with the greater Essex Mayoral elections. How will voting work? - Mayoral electorate to vote on unitary, like district elections. Charlene Slade and Mike Eldred responded that there were still a lot of unanswered questions at this point and currently district leads have requested five unitaries.

Question 2: Graham Foy, Information on timeline, Hertfordshire have a different precept so how this would be divided on responsibility and education? Charlene Slade waiting on more Information on how budget would be divided. Charlene Slade: timeline - local 2027, new authority 2028 possibly.

Question 3: Resident Ralph Cullen would like to know how cartography and highways would be determined. He also stated that residents should be rallied to be involved.

Cllr N Avey also raised the issue that as the planned elections did not take place In May 2025, this has now led to councillors having extended stays in office.

Town Clerk Beverley Rumsey will continue to work with the EALC and will filter information to residents as and when it is available.

540 ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION TIME

Round the table discussions on the following:

- 1) How can we attract new shops and businesses to Epping?
- 2) What Christmas lights would you like to see in Epping?
- 3) What facilities/community facilities are missing in Epping?

Cllr N Avey's table concluded that, the High Street had enough coffee shops and would like to see more variety in shopping choices, this could be aided by the lowering of business rates as an incentive.

They would also like to see simple Christmas lights in the high street along with the main Christmas tree and lights on the living trees where permitted.

For facilities, they would like to see more adult education groups, more recreational space to help with mental wellbeing.

Cllr H Pegrum's table concluded that we should encourage short term pop-up shops where possible. They would also like to see star lights in place of the wall mounted small trees. They would also like to see more useable/accessible toilets on the High Street.

Cllr C Burgess's table concluded that rent, high rates and the parking were having a detrimental effect and business rents and rates should be lowered. They would like to see star lights and the main tree decorated. They would like to see a community centre offering day and evening classes for the elderly and people unable to attend college. It was mentioned by Mayor Cllr Cherry McCredie that Kinder Essex had meetings at the Carpino Lounge.

Cllr J Duffell and Cllr R Sharif's table concluded that parking should be easier, possibly with side roads offering free parking at weekends and that there had been continued parking problems at the Cottis Lane multi-storey with the payment machines not working. Pop up shops with short leases should be considered and business rates should be lowered to encourage shops to stay.

The lights looked a bit tired, and sponsorship should be considered as a way forward or fund raisers to increase the light budget. More usable/accessible toilets are needed. A High Street incentive for businesses and more community help for children with SEN needs.

Cllr Janet Whitehouse's table concluded that businesses rent and rates should be lowered and more parking should be available. They were in favour of little star lights, along with lights on the High Street trees and the main tree lights. Community playgrounds are well used and of good standard. They would like to see the community toilet scheme on the High Street.

541 OPEN FORUM

The Town Mayor invited residents to raise questions or comments relating to matters specific to the town of Epping. Answers to questions were given by members or staff of the Town Council and any representatives of the District and County Councils. The Town Mayor said that if we were unable to respond to any questions at the meeting, they will be followed up with the resident in person after the meeting.

Resident Mr Graham Foy commented on the new Stonards Hill parking scheme and deemed it to be a good decision by the Town Council to implement this, stating that the car park is now used correctly for the use of recreation ground visitors. Mr Foy also asked if visitors stayed over the three hours and paid what income has the Town Council received. Town Clerk Beverley Rumsey responded that currently monthly income has been between £700-£800 of which the parking management take a percentage. Current charges are £2 per hour after the free three-hour period and £10 per day.

Resident Mr David Lodge commented on the high-speed limits around the forest especially at Coopersale Junction and Lower Forest with high risk to wildlife, would it be possible for the Town and Parish Councils in the area to ask Essex County Council to reconsider the current limits.

Mayor Cllr C McCredie commented that Safer Epping had reports of bad driving and speeding, and contact has been made with ECC on this point, but it would be a good idea to include the PFCC district commander and MP to discuss the speed limits and Mayor Cllr C McCredie would follow up with other councillors.

Resident C Hassell-Kingham commented on the number of overgrown and unworked allotments at the Meadow Road site, she stated that she had sent an email with concerns over this problem and asked if there was currently a waiting list for the site. There were also concerns about the overgrown paths that are not being maintained and are dangerous in places to walk on.

Town Clerk Beverley Rumsey responded that a site visit would be done to access the situation and plot holders will be contacted. Many letters had already been issued to anyone not tending their allotment properly and much reallocation had taken place.

Resident T Valder-Hogg commented on the status of the Neighbourhood Plan now that it is to be revised by the Inspector - has the Inspector given a timeframe on its conclusion? Cllr N Avey responded that he was waiting on the report, some parts will need editing and

streamlining and he was hopeful that it would be finalised by autumn, depending on referendum, but it's important that the Neighbourhood Plan is in place. Town Clerk Beverley Rumsey confirmed that updates would be shared on this.

The Town Mayor thanked everyone for attending the Annual Town Meeting. The Town Mayor invited people to stay and speak to local Councillors after the meeting.

MEETING CLOSURE

The Town Mayor, Cllr C McCredie closed the meeting at **8.50pm**.

MINUTES of the **PLANNING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING** held at Epping Hall, St. Johns Road, Epping on **Tuesday, 13th May 2025 at 7.15pm.**

PRESENT: Cllr N Avey (Chairman)
Cllr C McCredie (Mayor - *ex officio*)
Cllr C Burgess
Cllr R Sharif
Cllr M Wright (Vice Chairman)

OFFICERS: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)

542 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr G Scruton.

543 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 7 Planning Applications (Non-Pecuniary)

Cllr R Sharif requested an entry to be made in the minutes, to make it clear, that as a member of both the Town and District Councils, she will reconsider all matters at District level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations at the District tier. Therefore, she cannot be bound in any way by any view expressed in the parish tier or by the decisions of this Committee.

544 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

545 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Committee **RESOLVED** that:

the minutes of the meeting of the Planning & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday, 22nd April 2025 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

546 PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

There were no public questions or comments.

547 NOTICES AND INFORMATION

To receive any notices or information that the Chairman may wish to lay before Committee.

TPO/EPF/05/25 - Redgrove House, Stonards Hill, Epping, Essex CM16 4QQ (Attached)

A Tree Preservation Order has been put in place for Redgrove House.

Committee have **NOTED** the TPO as attached.

548 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

EPF/0641/25	21D, Ivy Chimneys, Epping, CM16 4EL. Mr Bryan.	Erection of one detached residential dwelling including parking, landscaping, drainage and associated infrastructure.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0728/25	58, Hemnall Street, Epping, CM16 4LU. N Goodey.	Removal of existing rear single storey ground floor extension. Proposed two storey side extension with pitched roof.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0731/25	50, Tower Road, Epping, CM16 5EN. Mr Richard Morrall.	Single storey rear extension, front infill extension.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0745/25	Forest Lodge, Wood Mead, Epping, CM16 6TD. Mr Paul Jackman.	External alterations/repairs including construction of detached three bay garage/store, changes to boundary treatments and landscaping.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application provided the work is carried out under the supervision of the conservation officer at EFDC.		
EPF/0777/25	23, Bower Hill, Epping, CM16 7AL. Jost Property LTD.	Front, rear, side and loft extensions.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application		
EPF/0797/25	8, Lynceley Grange, Epping, CM16 6RA. Mr & Mrs Barker.	Roof extension to facilitate a loft conversion and front ground floor extension to entrance.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application, but would suggest that the design of the dormers does not impact positively on the street scene. Council request that the dormers are designed in such a way as to not detract from the character of this urban area and street scene. Relevant policies: EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033, Part One: Policy DM9A (i) & (ii), D, E. National Planning Policy Framework December 2024: 210 (c)..		
EPF/0770/25	Coopersale House, Houblons Hill, Coopersale, Epping, CM16 7QL. Mrs I Margetson- Rushmore & Mr J Eaton.	TPO/EPF/31/91 (Ref: G3) T1: Poplar - Removal of one lateral branch over utility cable, as specified. Selective prune of second lateral branch away from overhead cables by up to 1.5m, as specified. T2: Sycamore - Selective prune of lateral branches away.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application provided the tree work is carried out under the supervision of the arboricultural officer at EFDC.		
EPF/0834/25	6, The Maltings, Palmers Hill, Epping, CM16 6SG T Space Architects.	Replacement of conservatory with side extension, and internal remodelling to basement and ground floors.
Committee OBJECT to this application. Committee do not support the loss of the conservatory which is part of the historic fabric of the building. The design of the proposed extension is far too modern and incongruous for the historic building and detracts rather than adds to the host		

dwelling. The conversion of the basement may impact the fabric of the historic building in terms of drainage/damp depending on the nature of the conversion and materials used. Any works to this building should be undertaken under the supervision of the conservation officer at EFDC.

Relevant policies: EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033, Part One: Policy DM7, B E & F. DM12. National Planning Policy Framework December 2024: 212, 213 (a).

EPF/0846/25	6, The Maltings, Palmers Hill, Epping, CM16 6SG. T Space Architects.	Grade II listed building consent for replacement of conservatory with side extension, and internal remodelling to basement and ground floors.
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Committee **OBJECT** to this application.

Committee do not support the loss of the conservatory which is part of the historic fabric of the building. The design of the proposed extension is far too modern and incongruous for the historic building and detracts rather than adds to the host dwelling. The conversion of the basement may impact the fabric of the historic building in terms of drainage/damp depending on the nature of the conversion and materials used. Any works to this building should be undertaken under the supervision of the conservation officer at EFDC.

Relevant policies: EFDC Local Plan 2011-2033, Part One: Policy DM7, B E & F. DM12. National Planning Policy Framework December 2024: 212, 213 (a).

549 OTHERS

EPF/0683/25	32, Tower Road, Epping, CM16 5EN. Mr K Kersey.	Prior approval Part 1 Class A.1(ea): Larger home extension.
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Committee have **NO COMMENTS** on this application.

550 PLANNING DECISIONS

Committee **NOTED** the decisions as received from Epping Forest District Council since the date of the previous agenda and up until the date of this agenda.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **7.41pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date

MINUTES of the **PLANNING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING** held at Epping Hall, St. Johns Road, Epping on **Tuesday, 27th May 2025 at 7.15pm.**

PRESENT: Cllr N Avey (Chairman)
Cllr C McCredie
Cllr C Burgess
Cllr M Wright (Vice Chairman)
Cllr G Scruton

OFFICERS: Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk)
Jo-Ann Lewis (Planning, Market & Events Officer)

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

24 DISPENSATIONS

There were no dispensations.

25 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Committee **RESOLVED** that:

the minutes of the meeting of the Planning & General Purposes Committee held on Tuesday, 13th May 2025 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

26 PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

There were no public questions or comments.

27 NOTICES AND INFORMATION

There were no notices or information

28 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

EPF/0886/25	Broadbanks 23 Ivy Chimneys Road EPPING CM16 4EL. SCENE Architects Ltd.	Variation to condition 2 'Plan no's on planning permission EPF/1286/20 (Demolition of existing dwelling and 2no. associated agricultural buildings and replacement with 3no. detached dwellings including ancillary works and landscaping)
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0860/25	60, Garnon Mead, Coopersale, Epping, CM16 7RW. Mr and Mrs Lodge.	Proposed single storey rear extension with pitched roof to replace existing conservatory.

Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0895/25	63, Lower Swaines, Epping, CM16 5ES. Mr Luke Beavis.	Garage conversion and the construction of new entrance porch to front. Roof lantern to existing rear extension.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0902/25	59, Hemnall Street, Epping, CM16 4LZ. Mr & Mrs Clarke.	Part two storey and part single storey front and side extensions, part two storey and part single storey rear extension and internal alterations. External swimming pool and small outbuilding.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0926/25	6 The Hedgerows, Crossing Road, Epping, CM16 7BQ. Sarah Hardy.	TPO/EPF/48/01 T1: Oak - Target prune to reduce 2 x over-extended limbs by up to 3m, as specified. Crown reduction of Eastern and South Eastern side by up to 2m, as specified. NB: The permitted specification of works is detailed in the conditions below.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application provided the work is carried out under the supervision of the arboricultural officer at EFDC.		
EPF/0938/25	Land adjacent to the pond, Madells, Epping CM16 4NN. Connick Tree Care.	TPO/EPF/08/75 0174: Ash - Fell and replace, as specified. NB: The permitted specification of works is detailed in the conditions below.
Committee OBJECTION to this application as no full tree report was submitted supporting why the tree should be felled. Committee would request that this is referred to the arboricultural officer at EFDC, to determine if the felling is necessary, and that if work is carried out it will be completed under their supervision.		
EPF/0916/25	89, Centre Drive, Epping, CM16 4JD. WHS Associates.	Single storey rear extension, first floor extension above existing side attached garage, single storey porch extension and store front elevation.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application.		
EPF/0964/25	269, High Street, Epping, CM16 4BP. Between the Lines Ltd.	Listed Building Application for repainting building exterior.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application provided the work is carried out under the supervision of the conservation officer at EFDC.		
EPF/0931/25	2, Rahn Road, Epping, CM16 4JB. Contour Landscapes.	TPO/EPF/25/93 (Ref: T1, G1) T1: Pine - Reduce lateral spread of the crown to the west over the main property to suitable growth points, as specified. Reduce over-extended sub-lateral branch projecting north to suitable growth points, as specified. T3: Pine - Crown lift to 4m above ground level to provide clearance of summer house, as specified.
Committee have NO OBJECTION to this application provided the work is carried out under the supervision of the arboricultural officer at EFDC.		

29 OTHERS

EPF/0973/25	3, Woodberry Down, Epping, CM16 6RJ. Fox Developments.	Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3, 5, 9, 12 & 13 on planning permission EPF/2389/24 (Demolition of existing dwelling and detached garage. Erection of 4no. four bedroom dwellings with associated landscaping, private amenity areas, car parking and 3no. new vehicular accesses across the existing footway).
Committee have NO COMMENT to make on this application.		
EPF/0994/25	23, Ivy Chimneys Epping, CM16 4EL. Essex Land and Build Developments Limited.	Certificate of lawful development for proposed outbuilding and pool.
Committee have NO COMMENT to make on this application.		

30 PLANNING DECISIONS

Committee **NOTED** the decisions as received from Epping Forest District Council since the date of the previous agenda and up until the date of this agenda.

The Chairman closed the meeting at **7.45pm**.

Signature of Chairman

Date

ATTACHMENT E

Resident request regarding a pedestrian crossing or safety signs on The Plain.

Cllr Janet Whitehouse and Cllr John Duffell sent the Town Clerk the following request which was received by a resident.

Dear Epping Town Council,

I am writing to raise a concern regarding pedestrian safety on The Plain , particularly near the bus stop where there is currently no designated crossing or safety signage. This area is frequently used by children and families, many of whom are trying to cross the road to access the nearby forest.

Unfortunately, vehicles often travel at high speeds along this stretch, making it extremely dangerous for pedestrians to cross safely—especially younger children. Given the combination of a busy bus stop, fast-moving traffic, and children regularly crossing, I kindly urge the council to consider installing a pedestrian crossing or, at the very least, appropriate signage to alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians. Many patients at St Margarets use the bus stop but with no safe area to cross it is only a matter of time till something serious happens.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to provide further details or speak directly if needed.

Warm regards

Resident

Cllr Holly Whitbread has picked up this request in her capacity as a District and County Councillor and has advised the following:

I met with the resident a few weeks ago, I have requested a speed survey as a first stage of looking into this via the LHPs which are currently still operational. I do agree the crossing which is there isn't ideally placed - really it should be by the bus stop and the road should be 40 mph like the other Forest roads.

There may be opportunities for signage on NHS/forest land to alert people of speed, etc as well.



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Epping Town Council
Epping Hall
St Johns Road
EPPING
CM16 5JU

363

**Site address**

Pellikaan Construction Ltd
Site Cabin
C/o Epping Leisure Centre
Bakers Lane
Epping, CM16 5DQ
epping@pellikaan.com

16 May 2025

Dear Sir or Madam,

We felt it was a good time to write to you and give you an update on the progress of the project to date as well as giving you an insight on the upcoming planned works.

The Sports Hall Roof is now fully complete along with the installation of the solar panels and we will soon be starting with the installation of substrate & planting on the remaining parts of the roof. As you may have noticed, we have commenced with the installation of the brick slips on the North and East Elevations of the building which, along with the installed glazing, should start to give you a feel for how the finished building will look. We will then be looking to start the remaining elevations in early June with a view to being complete by the start of August.

We will be starting with the final hard & soft landscaping works in mid-June with the initial focus on completing the service road including the foul sewer connection onto Bakers Lane. We will also progressively start replacing the solid hoarding we have in place for a more temporary hoarding to allow for access for the landscaping works to progress.

The partition walls are constructed on all levels inside the building along with the associated Mechanical & Electrical installations which are progressing as planned. Both swimming pools are now tiled & grouted with the 1st phase of the moveable floor in the Learner Pool installed. The main focus now is on the changing village tiling works in all areas. We will commence with the timber floor installation in the Sports Hall & Studio Areas in June as well as the installation of the Squash Courts.

We are also anticipating having our permanent water and power connections in the next 2 months which subsequently allows to start the Testing & Commissioning of the installed Mechanical & Electrical plant.

We will aim to provide you with a final update just after the Summer, but should you have any questions or queries in the meantime, we can be contacted at the following:

Project manager: Neil Buchanan via email at: epping@pellikaan.com or by phone on 07512 312 480.

Project updates are also available on Epping Forest District Council's dedicated project webpage, where you can view the latest CGI (computer-generated imagery) visuals of the facility. This can be accessed via <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/leisure/new-epping-leisure-centre/>.

Yours faithfully,

Pellikaan Construction Ltd

ATTACHMENT E2

MAYOR'S CHARITY DONATIONS

CanalAbility... the Mayor's chosen charity 2024-2025

I was first made aware of this charity just prior to becoming Mayor and thought it a worthy cause to support. CanalAbility attended the Town Show last year, also presented at the Civic Reception and had a most informative stand at the Epping Fire Station open day.

We raised in excess of £1000 from generous donations and afterwards from the Civic Reception. Also, Derek Whitbread organised a ladder climb at Epping Fire Station open day simulating climbing up and down Ben Nevis. Well done to the climbers. I did step on the first rung! Sponsorship was raised from the town by the lovely Donna Castle. We also had a raffle. The monies raised on the day from us and from the firefighters were split equally.

Let's not forget the West Ham signed football shirt which we were donated. Thank you West Ham. This was put in a blind auction by Everything Epping Forest and raised £200 which was shared between the firefighters charity and CanalAbility.

ATTACHMENT E3

THE EPPING SOCIETY: EPPING TOWN TRAIL

The Epping Society have created an Epping Town Trail and request collaborating with Epping Town Council on this project.

The request to the Town Council is:

- 1) Epping Town Council has a final edit
- 2) Epping Town Council prints 200 copies (light card). The Epping Society would contribute to the costs
- 3) Both organisations put it on their websites, either downloadable or as a link
- 4) We ask a few places to have some, as distribution points (where visitors might ask); maybe plastic dispensers?
- 5) Public launch with pictures and hopefully Everything Epping Forest

The Town Clerk is happy for the office team to absorb the tasks if Council approve the idea.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Epping is a small market town, on a low ridge (350ft), in SW Essex, about 17 miles NE of London, but cordoned from it by Epping Forest. Settlement in the area dates as far back as 7500BC with two banked forts in the forest, probably Iron Age. The Romans left traces of roads and a few artefacts, as well as likely spurious links to Boudica. The name “Epping” is thought to be from Anglo-Saxon: “epp” (up) & “ing” (cultivated lands). The Domesday Book, 1086 has “Eppinga” to the W. in Epping Upland.

The town proper dates from the C12th as Epping Heath (later Epping Street), then held by the Canons of Waltham Abbey. In 1253 King Henry III granted a Charter for a weekly market, soon to become an important cattle market with permanent pens in the High Street; it is recorded that sheep, pigs & even wives could be traded too! Here Winston Churchill (our MP 1924-45) addressed the public; since 1961 replaced by a thriving general market, on Mondays.

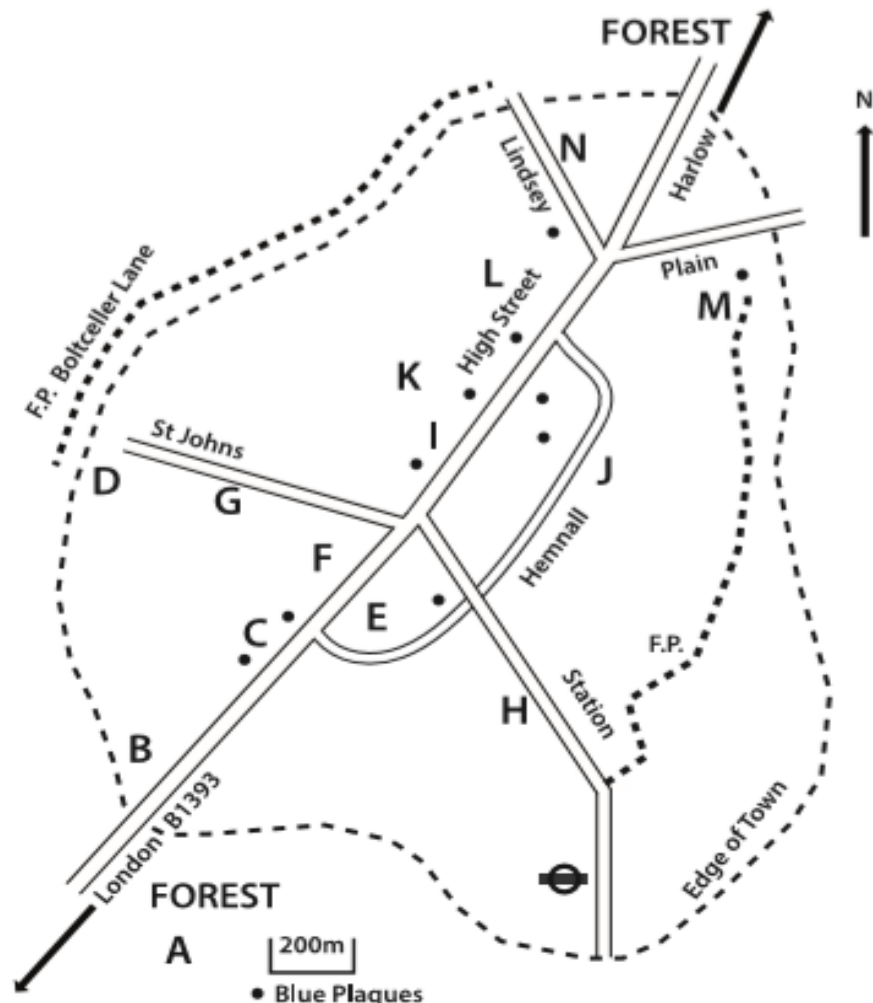
In medieval times Epping was on a major N-S trade route (London – Cambridge), growing slowly, especially along Lyndsey Street. With the arrival of the railway the C19th saw developments around the town. Today the town has three famous tower landmarks. They stand on the ridge of the main road and can be seen from many miles away. There is a 4th tower, in the hospital, but less obvious, despite being white.

Epping Town Trail

the
Epping
Society

Conserve Improve

Produced 2025



Map: Artistry in Design, Carlisle

INDEX TO MAP (details overleaf) :

- A** Bell Common, Jubilee trees, M25 tunnel, Forest Gate pub
- B** Epping Place & Winchelsea House
- C** Water tower
- D** Swaines Green
- E** Fire Station, Institute
- F** Methodist Church, green, St John's Church & tower, old cinema,
- G** St John's Road (to W.) - Centre Point, Epping Hall
- H** Station Road (to E.) - Victorian houses, Central Line tube station
- I** High street—a mix of older buildings, some timber-framed; market, fountain. Several old inns, also some elegant early C20th buildings
- J** Hemnall Street—keeper's posts, Kendal Lodge, Friends Meeting House
- K** Site of iron works, car park, sports centre, Bakers' Villas
- L** Civic Centre, Town Green, RC Church, War Memorial
- M** (to E.) Stonards Hill recreation area & Silley pavilion, hospital, The Plain
- N** (to W.) Lindsey Street—old cottages, UR Church, Beulah Lodge, Shaftesbury Farm

TOWN TRAIL DETAIL

A Bell Common, S. of the town, part of Epping Forest, here is managed grassland with open access; once called Beacon Common, the site possibly of a warning / signal brazier. Part is unique in having a cricket pitch over a motorway; in the 1980's local opposition forced the government to tunnel the M25 under the Forest. The M25 is nearby too. **The Forest** dates back to an 1878 Act of Parliament; Queen Victoria, on visiting in 1882: “ the greatest pleasure to dedicate this beautiful Forest to the use and enjoyment of my people for all time”. A few minutes S. is a fine double **avenue of trees** (parallel to the road) planted to mark her Jubilee. Just down the Theydon Road is the **Forest Gate Inn**, a traditional C17th low-ceilinged pub, which has featured in several TV programmes. The name relates to an original gated toll road.

B Epping Place & Winchelsea House - two of the town's most noted houses, at the South end of the High Street, here called High Road (both private); WH is c.1700, has 5 bays with a cornice, hipped roof, & a Tuscan porch. EP also of brick but with 4 bays, rebuilt 1706 after a fire, possibly an extension of WH, reputedly the summer home of the “Epping Giant” (Patrick Cotter O'Brien, over 8 feet tall, d. 1806).

C Water tower, built in 1872 after a long campaign by local Dr Joseph Clegg for clean water & proper drainage; Epping had been the last town in S. England to suffer cholera . The base is as high as the top of St Paul's Cathedral. Nearly opposite, down Queen's Alley can be identified the former Chapel of the Plymouth Brethren community.

D Swaines Green - to the West of town (past housing estates) is a large green area – partly for recreation with an imaginative play area, and partly a Nature Reserve managed by a collaboration of local organisations. (Display board).

E Epping Fire Station – a modern dark brick structure, with red door, drill tower behind. Appliances (fire engines) visible through the

windows. Manned by local on-call crews. Behind is the **Hemnall Social Club**, formed 1894 as the Epping Literary & Mechanics Institute; the current building opened in 1908; sponsored by the Wythes family. Architect T.G. Hart, built by Whiffen & Sons (all local). Epping red bricks with nice stone detailing.

F Former Methodist Church, 1887, brick with a gabled front, now a nursery. The wide **green** was once part of the cattle market. Central in the town is the **Parish Church of St John the Baptist**, an architectural landmark by the Victorian architects Bodley & Garner; built in 1889 on the site of a former Chapel, in a 14th century Gothic style. The iconic tall square tower was added in 1909. St John's is richly endowed with a magnificent 4-manual organ, a finely carved pulpit, screen and reredos, several interesting memorials, windows etc. A great benefactor of the Church was the late Mr E J Wythes of Copped Hall. Further information inside. Across the road, (over a red-brick shop front) can be seen the white front of **Epping's former cinema**, built 1863 as a public hall - Dame Clara Butt performed here. Opened 1912 as the Picture House cinema with 419 seats. Later named the Picture Palace; and then after a fire, the Empire Cinema (1936 -1954); it has also been a Tesco store.

G (St John's Road to W.) Centre Point, the arched front is all that remains of the Adult Community College (1861), previously Epping's main school; now Listed, with redevelopment around.

The Epping Hall began life as a Women's Institute Hall; since 2000 occupied by a fine new building; the office of the Epping Town Council. An unusual “flying” entrance; inside – a slate map, Art about the town, display of Town Twinning

H (to E.) Station Road has some fine Victorian houses, leading to the “**tube**”. The largely still-Victorian station dates from 1865, down the hill to avoid the high ridge, by the Eastern Counties Railway Co. Once steam, but electrified after WW2, then part of the London Underground Central Line from 1948/9. Some years later the line out to Ongar was shut, but most is now run as a heritage railway by local volunteers (buses from the Station).

Also a Signal Cabin Museum (open Sat.) Here too starts the Essex Way – a long-distance footpath to the coast at Harwich (plaque).

I High Street, There are over 30 Listed buildings in the High Street and the whole is a Conservation Area. In the early C19th some 25 horse -drawn coaches passed through each day, to London, Norwich, Cambridge, Bury St Edmunds etc; by 1800 there were 26 inns to serve that trade. A few timber-framed buildings from the **C17th** remain, the oldest is the Black Lion pub; other old inns to look for are the George & Dragon, the former Cock, & Thatched House; find timber frames & faces at 269 (once Batchelors Saddlers), horse-shoes elsewhere, & Church's Butchers . **Also some fine C18th** buildings can be seen, in a range of designs and materials – look for curved glass on what was once Pyne's department store. An ornate **water fountain** from 1887 (Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee) has been replaced, having been buried elsewhere for 27 years (see inscription); Buttercross Lane could indicate such a feature once stood here. Some elegant early **C20th buildings** – the former Post Office, Police Station, & Barclays Bank are identifiable.

J Hemnall Street (to the E.) was the traditional “back lane”; the brick wall behind the George & Dragon still has high keeper's posts for Victorian coachmen to tie their horses; **Kendal Lodge** (private) from the 1760s, with an interesting variety of occupants including Dr Thomas Dimsdale, who inoculated the Russian Royal family in 1768 against smallpox. The **Friends** (Quakers) **Meeting House** 1850, has an unusual round-headed window.

K Behind the High Street (to the W.) is the site of the **Cottis** “Archimedian” ironworks 1858 - 1982. Once a major employer; farm machinery was their core business also architectural fittings, transport and household items – eg lamps for the London embankment & railings for Buckingham Palace. Area now occupied by multistorey car park (display board) and Sports Centre. Beside M&S is a small **Community Garden**. Behind the car park is **Bakers' Villas**, a cluster of low-rise homes, funded by the Bakers' Benevolent Society for c. 60 retired members of that profession and their descendants. Originally at Bakers' Arms NE London.

L Civic Offices (Richard Reid 1985) of a post-

modern, quite controversial, Listed design. Of mixed styles, with a ceremonial gallery over an understated entrance. Inside is a striped full-height atrium with murals including Mid Summer Night's Dream (reputedly premiered at nearby Copped Hall); home to the District Council. **Town Green; RC Church** (1932). The **War memorial**, raised by public subscription, was unveiled by Brig. Gen. J. T. Wigan in 1921. Designed by Edward Warren (1856-1937), articulated to G F Bodley (see St John's church); the craftsman was Laurence Turner. A graceful, simple stone structure recording those lost in two world wars and subsequently; start of an annual town Remembrance procession. (excellent website).

M (to E.) Stonards Hill recreation area with the **Silley Pavilion**, named for a philanthropic local family. **St Margaret's Hospital** began as a Union Workhouse in 1837. The only original piece is the laundry (behind), in an Elizabethan style, with brick quoins and diamond lattice windows. In WW2, expansion was a semicircle of wards, as connected huts; 2005-7 saw a modern community hospital at the front. A claim to fame of SMH was its role in the famous Epping Jaundice (plaque). **The Plain** opposite the hospital was historically open grassland used for community activities, also circuses (elephants!), and there was an informal swimming lake in the wood.

N (to W.) Lindsey Street has a picturesque range of **old cottages**, a few stately Victorian houses, & the **United Reformed Church** – a church has been on this site for c.400 years, this building is much newer; **Beulah Lodge** (private) is partly C17th. Further down is **Shaftesbury Farm**, a fine range of Victorian agricultural buildings, complete with duck pond (private).

Nearby: Greensted Church (near Ongar, reputedly England's oldest church), Epping Forest (mostly to the South, highlights include Visitor Centre & Church at High Beech, also Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, near Chingford), Copped Hall, Garnon Bushes Nature Reserve (at Coopersale), Waltham Abbey (& museum), North Weald (airfield & museum).

Epping's Blue Plaques, to go on map as dots, people can discover :

Pisarro (44 Hemnal St)

Doubleday (Buttercross Lane)

Market (Aves opticians)

Church's - Soon

Addison (Court House)

Dr Clegg (Water tower)

Jill Barklem (the Green / Lindsey St)

Sid Hills (25 High St)

Earnest Wythes (Hemnal st)

Silley family (Theydon Grove)

Churchill (M&S)

St M Hosp)

Gracey (3 Woodberry Down) ??

TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES/ENGAGEMENTS: Cllr Janet Whitehouse

14th May to 10th June 2025

14 th May 2025	VE Day Tea Dance organised by Home Instead
20 th May 2025	Epping Forest Chamber of Commerce Business Forum
21 st May 2025	Waltham Abbey Town Council Annual meeting for Mayor making
28 th May 2025	Market Committee meeting
2 nd June 2025	Epping Forest Dementia Friendly Communities meeting
3 rd June 2025	Epping and Theydon Garnon Joint Charities meeting
4 th June 2025	Bus transport meeting at County Hall

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S DUTIES/ENGAGEMENTS: Cllr Razia Sharif

14th May to 10th June 2025

20 th May 2025	Epping Forest Chamber of Commerce Business Forum
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REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**1 PLAYGROUND INSPECTION REPORTS 2025**

The annual external playground inspection reports have been delayed slightly. The external inspections have taken place but the reports have not been received yet; they are due imminently. The playgrounds are all inspected regularly by our trained grounds team; these are the additional reports. The findings of these should be with Council on the July agenda.

2 LONDON 15 MILESTONE AT BELL COMMON

Back in 2017, Epping Town Council were requested to support local milestone restorer Jimmy Waters in restoring the milestone on Bell Common and repositioning the milestone at Palmers Hill. Council have been kept informed of the very slow progress and agreed to finance the milestone restoration at a cost of £500. This would be financed from the street furniture budget.

The Town Clerk is delighted to say that the stone on Bell Common (which has been shattered into pieces) should be repaired (or worst case scenario replaced) by the end of August and will be positioned near the entrance to the slip road to Hemnall House. This is following a meeting with the new Assistant Director and Superintendent of Epping Forest and her team, Jimmy, the stone mason and the Town Clerk. The cost will be higher than the estimated £500 from some time ago and it was agreed by the Superintendent that the City of London will split the cost with Epping Town Council so we can deliver this heritage asset for the Town.

There will be a public unveiling once this is in situ. The Town Clerk would like to thank Jimmy Waters for his tireless pursuit of this project and his positivity and enthusiasm for it, despite the years that have passed. There were discussions about all the milestones being considered for listed status in the future.

The Clerk will discuss the Palmers Hill milestone with Mr Waters once the Bell Common milestone is complete.

3 EPPING IN BLOOM SCARECROW FESTIVAL REMINDER

Epping in Bloom's popular Scarecrow Festival will be held on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th June 2025 from 11am to 4pm. Maps to be collected from the Market Garden Terrace (community garden beside Marks & Spencer). Please spread the word and encourage residents and businesses to take part. More details on taking part can be found by emailing: eppinginbloom@gmail.com

4 NEW RUBBISH ARRANGEMENTS FROM APRIL 2025

Having discussed the 2025-26 waste removal prices with the Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton, the Town Clerk was able to secure a reduced price from another contractor. Unfortunately, the contractor could not deliver what they promised and the contract was terminated immediately leaving Council with a potential situation of

built up waste at Stonards Hill recreation ground and Epping Hall. As we already use Strattons for some of our services, they agreed to take on the rubbish disposal arrangements. This was again discussed with Cllr G Scruton and at the time of writing this is proving a good arrangement. Council purchased their own Euro bins as the Town Supervisor wished to undertake his own maintenance of the bins. From April 2025, there are also more stringent recycling requirements and the change of bins has enabled the café to recycle more in accordance with Council's Climate and Environmental Awareness aims. The annual cost saving to Council of the collection service from what we had previously should total approximately £1000 if nothing changes. Once again, the Town Clerk would like to thank Strattons for their willing support with some of our more unpleasant tasks. This was dealt with as an operational change as it was a cost reduction.

5 EPPING HALL OFFICE REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

The contractor is currently sourcing external windows to match the existing as closely as possible. The Town Clerk has recently received Building Regulation drawings for the contractor and electrician to work with to ensure the refurbishment meets with the required regulations and the electrician is able to deliver the necessary safety plans. A start date of the school summer holidays 2025 was mentioned, but a building regulation application might delay things slightly. Council will be informed of progress and working detail once it is known.

Please note: this will be a major project for the office team in terms of clearance and relocation to elsewhere in Epping Hall.

6 JULIE'S CAFÉ BREAK IN

The roof of the café has been repaired following the break in at the café. The Town Clerk would like to thank the Town Supervisor and those assisting him for their prompt attention on a bank holiday Sunday when they are not at work.

04/06/2025

Epping Town Council 2025/2026

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Summary Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 04/06/2025

Month No: 2

Committee Report to 31/05/2025

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
Full Council						
Income	355,031	845,731	490,700			42.0%
Expenditure	146,626	775,015	628,389	0	628,389	18.9%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>208,406</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>(137,690)</u>			
plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0			
less Transfer to EMR	0	0	0			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>208,406</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>(137,690)</u>			

Earmarked Reserves

Income	0	0	0			0.0%
Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>			

Grand Totals:- Income	355,031	845,731	490,700			42.0%
Expenditure	146,626	775,015	628,389	0	628,389	18.9%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>208,406</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>(137,690)</u>			
plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0			
less Transfer to EMR	0	0	0			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>208,406</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>(137,690)</u>			

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
100 Service & Committee Support							
1076 Precept	322,896	645,791	322,896			50.0%	
1090 Interest Received	0	1,800	1,800			0.0%	
1900 Other Receipts	0	500	500			0.0%	
	322,896	648,091	325,196			49.8%	0
Service & Committee Support :- Income							
4000 Salaries	35,167	215,000	179,833		179,833	16.4%	
4010 Insurance	0	10,600	10,600		10,600	0.0%	
4020 Equipment	764	1,000	236		236	76.4%	
4025 Consumables	75	700	625		625	10.8%	
4030 Postage	180	800	620		620	22.5%	
4035 Printing & Photocopying	468	1,800	1,332		1,332	26.0%	
4040 Professional Fees	(2,190)	10,000	12,190		12,190	(21.9%)	
4045 Subscriptions & Licences	2,723	13,000	10,277		10,277	20.9%	
4050 Telephone & IT Services	1,612	9,000	7,388		7,388	17.9%	
4060 Training - Staff	27	2,000	1,973		1,973	1.4%	
4065 Training - Members	0	600	600		600	0.0%	
4070 Travel & Subsistence - Staff	91	500	409		409	18.3%	
4075 Travel & Subsistence - Members	0	600	600		600	0.0%	
4080 Mayor's Allowance	(532)	1,000	1,532		1,532	(53.2%)	
4090 Bank Charges	17	110	93		93	15.5%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	66	1,000	934		934	6.6%	
4100 Bad Debt & Write Offs	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
4255 Utilities	385	0	(385)		(385)	0.0%	
	38,854	267,810	228,956	0	228,956	14.5%	0
Service & Committee Support :- Indirect Expenditure							
	284,042	380,281	96,240				
Net Income over Expenditure							
110 Neighbourhood Planning							
4370 N Planning Guidance	(1,233)	1,000	2,233		2,233	(123.3%)	
	(1,233)	1,000	2,233	0	2,233	(123.3%)	0
Neighbourhood Planning :- Indirect Expenditure							
	1,233	(1,000)	(2,233)				
Net Expenditure							
120 Grants							
4145 Grants - Other Powers	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0.0%	0
Grants :- Indirect Expenditure							
	0	(2,000)	(2,000)				
Net Expenditure							

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
140 Events & Publications							
1200 Town Show Income	1,053	4,500	3,447			23.4%	
1210 Christmas Market Income	(50)	4,500	4,550			(1.1%)	
Events & Publications :- Income	1,003	9,000	7,997			11.1%	0
4165 Epping in Bloom	1,000	1,000	0		0	100.0%	
4170 Town Show Expenditure	21	4,000	3,979		3,979	0.5%	
4175 Christmas Market Expenditure	0	4,500	4,500		4,500	0.0%	
4180 Christmas Lights Expenditure	0	15,000	15,000		15,000	0.0%	
4185 Christmas Tree Expenditure	0	3,000	3,000		3,000	0.0%	
4195 Mayor's Civic Reception	1,418	2,000	582		582	70.9%	
4205 Talk About Epping	307	1,000	693		693	30.7%	
4215 Distribution Costs	218	0	(218)		(218)	0.0%	
4220 Other Council Events	7	2,500	2,493		2,493	0.3%	
4225 Other Council Publications	(110)	1,320	1,430		1,430	(8.3%)	
Events & Publications :- Indirect Expenditure	2,861	34,320	31,459	0	31,459	8.3%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(1,858)	(25,320)	(23,462)				
160 Epping Hall							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	6,650	48,000	41,350			13.9%	
Epping Hall :- Income	6,650	48,000	41,350			13.9%	0
4010 Insurance	4,597	8,000	3,403		3,403	57.5%	
4020 Equipment	34	1,500	1,466		1,466	2.3%	
4025 Consumables	107	1,500	1,393		1,393	7.1%	
4085 PWLB Loan Repayments	16,164	16,164	(0)		(0)	100.0%	
4250 Business Rates	10,978	12,000	1,022		1,022	91.5%	
4255 Utilities	2,794	15,000	12,206		12,206	18.6%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	792	15,000	14,208		14,208	5.3%	
Epping Hall :- Indirect Expenditure	35,467	69,164	33,697	0	33,697	51.3%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(28,817)	(21,164)	7,653				
180 Jack Silley Pavilion							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	4,644	31,000	26,356			15.0%	
Jack Silley Pavilion :- Income	4,644	31,000	26,356			15.0%	0
4010 Insurance	0	1,720	1,720		1,720	0.0%	
4020 Equipment	0	800	800		800	0.0%	
4025 Consumables	77	500	423		423	15.5%	
4250 Business Rates	4,840	4,800	(40)		(40)	100.8%	

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4255 Utilities	1,410	12,500	11,090		11,090	11.3%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	611	6,000	5,389		5,389	10.2%	
Jack Silley Pavilion :- Indirect Expenditure	6,939	26,320	19,381	0	19,381	26.4%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(2,295)	4,680	6,975				
200 Epping Market							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	2,800	33,500	30,700			8.4%	
1310 Market casuals	1,075	10,500	9,425			10.2%	
Epping Market :- Income	3,875	44,000	40,125			8.8%	0
4007 Advertising & promotion	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4010 Insurance	0	760	760		760	0.0%	
4020 Equipment	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4085 PWLB Loan Repayments	3,080	6,160	3,080		3,080	50.0%	
4250 Business Rates	4,990	5,500	510		510	90.7%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	50	1,000	950		950	5.0%	
4300 Market Contractor	3,916	24,500	20,584		20,584	16.0%	
Epping Market :- Indirect Expenditure	12,036	39,420	27,384	0	27,384	30.5%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(8,161)	4,580	12,741				
220 Epping Cemetery							
1500 Burials & Memorials	7,500	30,000	22,500			25.0%	
Epping Cemetery :- Income	7,500	30,000	22,500			25.0%	0
4010 Insurance	0	960	960		960	0.0%	
4020 Equipment	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4250 Business Rates	2,445	2,000	(445)		(445)	122.3%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	180	3,000	2,820		2,820	6.0%	
Epping Cemetery :- Indirect Expenditure	2,625	6,960	4,335	0	4,335	37.7%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	4,875	23,040	18,165				
240 Parks & Building Maintenance							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	45	6,000	5,955			0.8%	
1320 Tennis Court income	389	1,800	1,411			21.6%	
1600 Town Greens	0	2,400	2,400			0.0%	
1900 Other Receipts	1,564	0	(1,564)			0.0%	
Parks & Building Maintenance :- Income	1,998	10,200	8,202			19.6%	0

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4000 Salaries	35,466	245,000	209,534		209,534	14.5%	
4010 Insurance	0	3,550	3,550		3,550	0.0%	
4020 Equipment	1,522	8,000	6,478		6,478	19.0%	
4025 Consumables	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	80	0	(80)		(80)	0.0%	
4255 Utilities	982	6,000	5,018		5,018	16.4%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	1,151	25,000	23,849		23,849	4.6%	
4265 Public Toilet Cleaning	220	1,300	1,080		1,080	16.9%	
4270 Tree management	700	3,000	2,300		2,300	23.3%	
4275 Tennis Courts	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4310 Vehicles	140	2,000	1,860		1,860	7.0%	
4360 Fuel	2,570	4,500	1,930		1,930	57.1%	
Parks & Building Maintenance :- Indirect Expenditure	42,832	300,350	257,518	0	257,518	14.3%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(40,834)	(290,150)	(249,316)				
260 Public Convenience							
1055 Utility Recharges	0	10,000	10,000			0.0%	
Public Convenience :- Income	0	10,000	10,000			0.0%	0
4020 Equipment	16	100	84		84	16.3%	
4025 Consumables	30	1,000	970		970	3.0%	
4255 Utilities	5,403	10,000	4,597		4,597	54.0%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4265 Public Toilet Cleaning	390	6,000	5,610		5,610	6.5%	
Public Convenience :- Indirect Expenditure	5,839	19,100	13,261	0	13,261	30.6%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	(5,839)	(9,100)	(3,261)				
280 Allotments							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	4,203	4,440	237			94.7%	
Allotments :- Income	4,203	4,440	237			94.7%	0
4010 Insurance	0	320	320		320	0.0%	
4020 Equipment	0	300	300		300	0.0%	
4025 Consumables	0	300	300		300	0.0%	
4255 Utilities	50	400	350		350	12.4%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	50	1,820	1,770	0	1,770	2.7%	0
Net Income over Expenditure	4,154	2,620	(1,534)				

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual	Variance Annual	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
300 Street Furniture							
4020 Equipment	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.0%	
4095 Miscellaneous Expenditure	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	88	2,000	1,912		1,912	4.4%	
Street Furniture :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>88</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>4,912</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4,912</u>	<u>1.8%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(88)</u>	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>(4,912)</u>				
320 War Memorial							
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	0	100	100		100	0.0%	
War Memorial :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>(100)</u>	<u>(100)</u>				
340 Council as Landlord							
1300 Lettings Rents & Licences	587	6,000	5,413			9.8%	
1900 Other Receipts	1,100	5,000	3,900			22.0%	
Council as Landlord :- Income	<u>1,687</u>	<u>11,000</u>	<u>9,313</u>			<u>15.3%</u>	<u>0</u>
4260 Repairs & Maintenance	270	1,500	1,230		1,230	18.0%	
Council as Landlord :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>270</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,230</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,230</u>	<u>18.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>1,417</u>	<u>9,500</u>	<u>8,083</u>				
360 Council as Tenant							
4400 Letting Rents & Licence Costs	0	151	151		151	0.0%	
Council as Tenant :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>(151)</u>	<u>(151)</u>				
800 Stonards Refurbishment S106							
1250 Stonards refurbishment	576	0	(576)			0.0%	
Stonards Refurbishment S106 :- Income	<u>576</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(576)</u>				<u>0</u>
Net Income	<u>576</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(576)</u>				
Grand Totals:- Income	355,031	845,731	490,700			42.0%	
Expenditure	146,626	775,015	628,389	0	628,389	18.9%	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>208,406</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>(137,690)</u>				
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>208,406</u>	<u>70,716</u>	<u>(137,690)</u>				

Date: 04/06/2025

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
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Barclays No 1 Account

List of Payments made between 01/04/2025 and 30/04/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
04/04/2025	Barclays Bank plc	DEBIT	8.50		Commission charges 13Feb/12Mar
09/04/2025	Co-operative Bank current	Transfer	40,000.00		Transfer 米
22/04/2025	EE	DD01	67.25		Mobile/router April
Total Payments			40,075.75		

List of Payments made between 01/04/2025 and 30/04/2025

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
01/04/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD02	484.30		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
08/04/2025	Fleet (Line Markers) Ltd	BAC0804/01	268.80		Pitchmarker
08/04/2025	GLS Educational Supplies	BAC0804/02	51.34		2xpkgs A3 paper
08/04/2025	Stratton Contractors Ltd	BAC0804/03	65.00		Waste removal from mrkt garden
08/04/2025	Chubb Fire & Security Ltd	BAC0804/04	298.70		Intruder alarm callout
08/04/2025	Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd	BAC0804/05	181.44		Tool box
08/04/2025	Institute of Cemetery & Cremat	BAC0804/06	105.00		Membership renewal 25-26
08/04/2025	Kent County Council	BAC0804/07	286.67		Printer rental May-Jul 25
08/04/2025	Mailcoms Ltd	BAC0804/08	102.60		Franking mach software update
08/04/2025	Minster Baywatch Ltd	BAC0804/09	96.00		PCN Cxx admin fee
08/04/2025	NPower Commercial Gas	BAC0804/10	22.78		Electric Mar 25
08/04/2025	RAD Group	BAC0804/11	586.56		IT support Apr 25
08/04/2025	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	BAC0804/12	1,976.40		Bookings Supp
08/04/2025	Stratton Contractors Ltd	BAC0804/13	390.00		March toilet cleaning
08/04/2025	Envirecycle Ltd	BAC0804/14	576.00		Rubbish removal Stonards
08/04/2025	CSA	BAC0804/15	465.51		Deductions March pay
08/04/2025	Essex Pension Fund	BAC0804/17	4,817.06		Pension conts Mar 25
08/04/2025	HMRC	BAC0804/18	9,405.58		NI & PAYE Mar 25
08/04/2025	Epping In Bloom	BAC0804/19	1,000.00		Grant Funding
08/04/2025	Petty Cash	Transfer	250.00		Transfer 
08/04/2025	Nest Pension	BAC0804/16	287.66		Pension conts Mar 25
09/04/2025	Yu Energy Retail Limited	DD03	1,031.34		Electric Mar 25
10/04/2025	Co-operative Online Account	Transfer	600.00		Transfer 
10/04/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD04	240.10		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
10/04/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD05	499.00		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
10/04/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD06	1,096.00		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
11/04/2025	Fifi's Boutique	BAC2204/06	50.00		Xmas market refund
11/04/2025	British Gas Services Ltd	DD07	431.81		Gas 28.1-28.3
14/04/2025	Salary transfers	BACS	22,926.69		Salary payments
14/04/2025	Co-operative Online Account	Transfer	750.00		Transfer 
14/04/2025	Corona Energy	DD08	1,593.71		Electric Mar 25
14/04/2025	D W Erections	DD09	1,958.00		Market supervision Erect Apr
14/04/2025	Salary transfer	BACS	863.44		B Gough overpayment
15/04/2025	Peninsula	DD12	519.37		HR and H&S support
22/04/2025	M A Eckton	BAC2204/01	834.00		Repair toilets, taps+manhole
22/04/2025	F Pegrum & Son	BAC2204/02	144.00		Hedge cutting at SH rec ground
22/04/2025	Mobile Account Solutions (Hold	BAC2204/03	462.50		Telephone costs March
22/04/2025	Stratton Contractors Ltd	BAC2204/04	250.00		Fly tip+rubbish removal
22/04/2025	Mr D R Whitbread	BAC2204/05	88.00		Clean EH windows+bus stops
22/04/2025	George Hobin	302122	25.00		Allotment aware LB lane
22/04/2025	David Thorneycroft	302123	25.00		allotment award Meadow Rd
22/04/2025	B Rumsey	302124	696.00		Wheelie bins x 3
22/04/2025	Epping Forest Pipe Band	302125	225.00		Civic Reception entertainment
22/04/2025	Tracey J Lyons	302126	100.00		Singer Civic Reception
22/04/2025	EDF Energy	DD10	618.59		Electric Mar 25
22/04/2025	Dieselink Services	DD11	97.28		Fuel
23/04/2025	Castle Water Ltd	BACS	-3,268.41		Reinv Apr24-Jun24

Date: 04/06/2025

Epping Town Council 2025/2026

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Co-operative Bank current

List of Payments made between 01/04/2025 and 30/04/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
23/04/2025	SLCC	BAC2304/01	27.00		EALC AGM B Rumsey
Total Payments			<u>54,600.82</u>		SLCC

List of Payments made between 01/04/2025 and 30/04/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
09/04/2025	Zoom Communication	001	15.59		Inv 300577819
14/04/2025	Tesco	002	241.43		Civic Reception drinks
15/04/2025	WBS	003	744.00		Inv WBS7715
15/04/2025	Funky Pigeon	004	31.99		Cushion for Mayors reception
22/04/2025	Nisbets	005	40.78		Utopia glasses
23/04/2025	HPO Instant Ink	006	5.49		Ink subscription
Total Payments			<u>1,079.28</u>		

Date: 04/06/2025



Epping Town Council 2025/2026

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Time: 14:39

Barclays No 1 Account

List of Payments made between 01/05/2025 and 31/05/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
08/05/2025	Barclays Bank plc	DEBIT	8.50		Commission charges 13Mar/13Apr
14/05/2025	Co-operative Bank current	Transfer	20,000.00		Transfer 
15/05/2025	Public Works Loan Board	DD13	19,243.68		Loan repayment
21/05/2025	EE	DD14	71.42		Mobile/modem May
28/05/2025	Co-operative Bank current	Transfer	30,000.00		Transfer 
Total Payments			<u>69,323.60</u>		

Time: 14:39

Co-operative Bank current

List of Payments made between 01/05/2025 and 31/05/2025

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Authorized Ref	Transaction Detail
01/05/2025	CanalAbility	302127	170.00		Mayor charity donation from CR
01/05/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD01	484.00		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
08/05/2025	Yu Energy Retail Limited	DD02	870.30		Purchase Ledger Payment
12/05/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD03	245.00		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
12/05/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD04	499.00		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
12/05/2025	Epping Forest District Council	DD05	1,098.00		NDR 1/4/25 to 1/4/26
13/05/2025	Capitol Floor & Hygiene Mainte	BAC1305/01	132.00		Stonard toilet clean 30.3-20.4
13/05/2025	EPC Mechanical	BAC1305/02	326.12		Replace light in JSP kitchen
13/05/2025	GLS Educational Supplies	BAC1305/03	193.90		FB1 keys, paper, highlighters
13/05/2025	Kent County Council	BAC1305/04	772.50		Gas 28.2-31.3
13/05/2025	Sharrons Event Catering Compan	BAC1305/05	2,683.20		Civic Rec catering
13/05/2025	Amoli Marketing Ltd	BAC1305/06	261.00		ACV leaflet drop
13/05/2025	The Hemnall Social Club	BAC1305/07	200.00		VE Day entertainment donation
13/05/2025	Nest pension	BAC1305/08	287.66		Pension deductions Apr 25
13/05/2025	CSA	BAC1305/09	350.56		Deductions Apr 25
13/05/2025	Essex Pension Fund	BAC1305/10	3,579.86		Pension deductions Apr 25
13/05/2025	HMRC	BAC1305/11	7,678.06		NI+PAYE conts Apr 25
13/05/2025	Petty Cash	TRANSFER	250.00		Petty cash withdrawal
14/05/2025	Salary transfers	BACS	22,748.59		Salary payments
14/05/2025	D W Erections	DD06	1,958.00		Market supervision Erect May
14/05/2025	Co-operative Online Account	Transfer	691.00		Transfer 
15/05/2025	Co-operative Online Account	Transfer	600.00		Transfer 
15/05/2025	British Gas Services Ltd	BACS	315.49		Gas 28.3-1.5.25
15/05/2025	Peninsula	DD08	519.37		HR+H&S support
15/05/2025	SLCC	BACS	0.01		Test payment
16/05/2025	Corona Energy	DD09	4,935.37		Electric Apr 25
16/05/2025	Everflow	DD10	629.05		Water 10.6-9.7
21/05/2025	EDF Energy	DD11	533.72		Electric Apr 25
27/05/2025	Capitol Floor & Hygiene Mainte	BAC2705/01	132.00		Stonards loo clean 27.4-18.5
27/05/2025	Chubb Fire & Security Ltd	BAC2705/02	432.00		EH Signalling upgrade
27/05/2025	Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd	BAC2705/03	14.10		Mixing bottle, washer, nuts
27/05/2025	G B Sport & Leisure UK Ltd	BAC2705/04	80.40		Basketball chain net
27/05/2025	G T F Treecare Ltd	BAC2705/05	840.00		Fell tree at cemetery
27/05/2025	Kent County Council	BAC2705/06	274.63		Printing Feb-Apr 25
27/05/2025	Kent County Council	BAC2705/07	530.20		Gas 31.3-30.4.25
27/05/2025	Mobile Account Solutions (Hold	BAC2705/08	461.32		Calls April 2025
27/05/2025	MSPC Ltd	BAC2705/09	307.00		TAE Summer 2025 print
27/05/2025	NPower Commercial Gas	BAC2705/10	22.05		Electric Apr 25
27/05/2025	Pear Technology Services Ltd	BAC2705/11	60.00		Epping Cem map prints
27/05/2025	RAD Group	BAC2705/12	586.56		IT support May 25
27/05/2025	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	BAC2705/13	1,094.40		Year End 2025
27/05/2025	Vision ICT Ltd	BAC2705/14	300.00		Website hosting Jul25-Jun26
27/05/2025	Mr D R Whitbread	BAC2705/15	88.00		Clean EH windows+bus stops
27/05/2025	GLS Educational Supplies	BAC2705/16	92.86		Jumbo toilet rolls
27/05/2025	Simon Phillips	BAC2705/17	469.00		50% cemetery refund
27/05/2025	Epping Forest District Council	302128	21.00		TENS licence for Town Show
29/05/2025	PHS Group	DD12	407.60		JSP toilet provisions Jun-Aug

Date: 04/06/2025

Epping Town Council 2025/2026

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Time: 14:39

Co-operative Bank current

List of Payments made between 01/05/2025 and 31/05/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
Total Payments			<u>59,224.88</u>		

List of Payments made between 01/05/2025 and 31/05/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
02/05/2025	Amazon UK	008	19.55		Refuse bins
03/05/2025	Amazon UK	007	14.97		VE Day banners & decors
03/05/2025	Amazon UK	009	21.65		VE day banner & backdrop
06/05/2025	Amazon Business	010	3.38		A4 plastic wallets
06/05/2025	Amazon UK	013	12.99		Long matches
07/05/2025	Amazon UK	011	9.48		Pencil sharpener
07/05/2025	Amazon UK	012	11.49		Stiky notes x 4
09/05/2025	Zoom Communication	014	15.59	INV304710088	Zoom Communication
15/05/2025	Wheelie Bin Solutions	015	55.20		Bin keys x 5
15/05/2025	John Lewis & Partners	016	906.95		Apple MacBook
23/05/2025	HP Instant Ink	017	19.99		Ink sub 1108308747
28/05/2025	DVLA	018	140.00		Vehicle licence YE56KEJ
Total Payments			1,231.24		

Epping Town Council

Internal Audit 2024-25 (Final Update Report)

30th May 2025

Stephen Christopher

for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background and Scope

Town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control, and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (the AGAR). Auditing Solutions Ltd was appointed to undertake this function on behalf of Epping Town Council for the 2024-25 financial year.

This report sets out the results of our final audit visit for the year, which was undertaken on 28th May 2025. It updates the reports issued in December 2024 and March 2025 following our interim audit visits. Once again, we wish to thank the Town Clerk and her colleagues for their assistance in enabling us to complete our audit work.

Internal Audit Approach

In carrying out the audit, we have had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or mis-representation in the AGAR. We have employed a combination of selective sampling techniques (where appropriate) and 100% detailed checks in a number of key areas, in order to gain sufficient assurance that the Council's financial and regulatory systems and controls are appropriate and are fit for the purposes intended.

Our audit programme is designed to provide assurance that the Council's financial systems remain robust and operate in a manner which ensures effective probity of transactions and affords a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' in the Council's AGAR, which requires independent assurance over a number of internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

On the basis of the programme of audit work that we have undertaken, we consider that the Council continues to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal control. The records held in support of the accounting transactions are of a high standard and provide an effective audit trail, with clear cross-referencing of all relevant documentation.

We have completed and signed the 'Annual Internal Audit Report' on Page 3 of the 2024-25 AGAR. In doing so, we have concluded that, in all significant respects, the internal control objectives set out in that report "were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council".

In the following sections, we explain the objectives of each area of our audit, summarising the work undertaken and our findings. We are pleased to report that there were no matters arising from our final audit work that required a formal comment or recommendation. We ask that Members consider the content of this report.

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<p>This report has been prepared for the sole use of Epping Town Council. To the fullest extent permitted by law, no responsibility or liability is accepted by Auditing Solutions Ltd to any third party who purports to use or rely, for any reason whatsoever, on this report, its contents or conclusions.</p>
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Detailed Report

Accounting records & Banking arrangements

Our objective is to confirm that the accounting records are accurate and up to date, with no anomalous entries in the cashbooks or financial ledger, and that appropriate banking arrangements are in place.

The Council maintains its accounting records using the Rialtas ‘Omega’ software, which is generally acknowledged as one of the market leaders for this tier of local government. Rialtas staff provide assistance to the Council with the year-end closure of the accounts.

The Council holds current accounts with Barclays Bank and the Co-operative Bank. The latter is now used for the majority of the day-to-day transactions, with the Barclays account mainly used for direct debit payments. An on-line account with the Co-operative Bank is also held, which is controlled by the Town Clerk, and this is used for internet payments. In addition, the Council holds an instant access “Business Premium” account with Barclays and a “95-day Saver” account with the Nationwide Building Society. In October 2024, when reviewing the Investment Strategy, the Corporate Governance Advisory Committee (CGAC) decided that no changes to the banking arrangements are required for the time being.

In the course of our audit work, we confirmed the following:

- The opening trial balance on Omega for 2024-25 agreed to the closing balances in the 2023-24 accounts;
- The financial ledgers remained “in balance” throughout the year;
- The accounting code structure is appropriate for the Council’s budget reporting and control requirements;
- From review of a sample of four months transactions, the detailed accounting entries in the Omega cash books for the two current accounts and the online account reconciled fully to the supporting bank statements;
- From review of a sample of the monthly bank reconciliations undertaken during the year and as at the year end, we did not identify any long-standing, un-cleared items or anomalous entries;
- Bank reconciliations continue to be reviewed on a regular basis by a nominated Councillor;
- The bank balances as at 31st March 2025 have been reported correctly in Section 2, Line 8 of the AGAR;
- Back-ups of the Council’s IT systems are made to the Cloud by the IT support providers, RAD Group, who were appointed in May 2024. The Town Clerk’s computer is also backed up daily on a USB, and
- The External Auditors completed their work on the Council’s 2023-24 AGAR and issued their audit certificate on 15th August 2024, with no matters arising. The outcome of the audit was reported to the Council on 10th September 2024, with the details published on the website in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Corporate Governance

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust corporate governance arrangements in place and that, as far as we may reasonably be expected to ascertain (as we do not attend Council or Committee meetings), all meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been, or are being, considered for implementation.

During the course of our audits, we confirmed the following:

- Our review of the minutes of the meetings of the Council and its committees held during the year did not identify any issues that we consider might have an adverse effect, through litigation or other causes, on the Council's future financial stability;
- New Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its meeting on 12th November 2024, following the publication of revised national guidance from NALC and consideration by the CGAC. Both the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were considered again by the CGAC at its meeting on 25th February 2025 and at the Council meeting on 11th March 2025, where it was determined that no further changes were required.
- A wide range of other policies and procedures are in place and these are also reviewed on a regular basis by the CGAC, before formal adoption by the Council. We note that, following a recommendation from the CGAC, the Council has engaged the services of a specialist firm, for a period of two years, to assist with the development of key policies and procedures.
- During the summer of 2024, the Council provided the proper opportunity for the exercise of public rights in relation to the 2023-24 accounts, in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Expenditure and VAT

Our objective in this area is to ensure that:

- Council resources are released in accordance with approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- Any discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- An official ordering process is in place and operated for appropriate purchases,

acknowledging that a range of goods and services are provided under contractual requirements (e.g., electricity supply) or legislation (e.g., non-domestic rates);

- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed, and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the VAT control account for periodic recovery.

To test compliance with the above, we examined a sample of payments from across the financial year, as recorded in the Omega cashbooks. Our sample included all individual payments in excess of £2,500, plus every 35th entry in the cash books, irrespective of value. This involved the review of 43 transactions, amounting to £316,170, which represents approximately 65% of gross non-pay related expenditure. The overall value of our sample was significantly higher than in previous years, as it included the expenditure incurred on the Stonards Hill Skatepark refurbishment. There were no matters arising from our review.

As part of our testing of expenditure, we also check, on a sample basis, to confirm that appropriate national requirements and the Council's own Financial Regulations/Standing Orders are followed when entering into contracts that require to be formally tendered. At our first interim visit, we reviewed documentation relating to the award of the contract for the Epping Hall Reconfiguration Project. We confirmed that the national regulatory requirements had been followed, with the tender opportunity advertised on the Government's Contracts Finder website. We also confirmed that, following a tender evaluation process, the award of the contract was formally approved at the Council meeting on 8th October 2024 and the decision minuted.

Finally, in this area of our audit, we confirmed that VAT Returns continue to be submitted quarterly in electronic format, as required by extant legislation, with the detail being reconciled to the Omega financial ledger. At the time of our final audit, all four quarterly returns for 2024-25 had been submitted, with the net reclaim due for the final quarter included as a year-end debtor.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potentially significant areas of risk of either a financial or health & safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage those risks in order to minimise the opportunity for them to occur.

In the course of our audit work, we confirmed the following:

- The Council's 'risk management statement' (overall risk management policy) was reviewed by the CGAC in October 2024 and approved at the Council meeting on 12th November 2024.
- The detailed 'internal risk register' was reviewed by the CGAC on 25th February 2025 and approved by the Council at its meeting on 11th March 2025. This ensured that the Council satisfied the regulatory requirement to assess its significant risks and review

the arrangements to manage them within the financial year (AGAR Section 1, Assertion C).

- The main insurance cover continues to be provided by Zurich, with the current policy running until 30th June 2025. This policy includes Public Liability cover of £15 million, Employers Liability of £10 million and Fidelity guarantee of £1 million. The level of cover is in line with other similar sized local authorities and would appear to be adequate to meet the current needs of the Council. Separate insurance policies are in place for vehicles and cyber risk.
- As part of the Council's wider health and safety arrangements, a regular programme of reviews of the five playgrounds and the play equipment is undertaken. This includes weekly inspections by the Council's own staff, supplemented by annual external inspections carried out by the Play Inspection Company to assess compliance with national regulatory standards, principally British Standard EN 1176. We confirmed with the Town Clerk that this year's annual inspections had been delayed slightly (the previous ones having been completed in March 2024), but were undertaken in week commencing 19th May 2025. The inspection reports are still to be received, but the findings will be reported to the Council as soon as they are available.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Budget Setting, Budgetary Control and Reserves

Our objective is to confirm that the Council has robust processes for identifying and approving future budgetary requirements and the level of Precept to be drawn down from Epping Forest District Council, and that effective budget monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place. We also consider whether the Council is retaining appropriate funds in earmarked and general reserves, both to finance its ongoing spending plans and to cover any unplanned expenditure that might arise.

From our review of the minutes and discussions with officers, we confirmed that, in line with the sound approach adopted in previous years, budget monitoring reports produced by the Town Clerk continues to be considered at each Council meeting, with a 'pre-formal closedown' report on the year-end outturn position made on 8th April 2025.

Initial consideration of the 2025-26 budget was given at the Council meeting in December 2024 and included an assessment of general and earmarked reserve requirements. The budget and Precept requirements were formally approved at the Council meeting on 14th January 2025, where the decision was made to request a Precept of £645,791, compared to £621,795 in 2024-25. After taking into account changes to the tax base, this equates to an increase of £2.37 per annum per annum for a Band D property.

In 2024-25, the Council had budgeted for a small surplus of just over £1,000. Whilst there were a number of areas of under and overspend in the year, the actual outturn position was slightly more favourable than the budget, showing a surplus of £9,570. A major unbudgeted variance was the receipt of a grant of £115,000 from the National Lottery to help fund the cost of refurbishment of the Stonards Hill Skatepark. The total cost of the refurbishment was £145,000. The balance of £30,000 was met from Earmarked Reserves (EMRs).

At 31st March 2025, the Council's overall reserves amounted to £271,176, compared to £261,606 at previous year end. Of these, the EMRs amounted to £70,281 (compared to £113,741 at 31st March 2024). The reduction was due principally to the contribution towards the Skatepark refurbishment, but also included £10,800 for new cemetery beams and £3,750 for the upgrade of an item of grounds equipment.

The General Reserve balance at 31st March 2025 stood at £200,895 compared with £147,865 at the previous year end. The increase is due both to the budget underspend and the subsequent transfers from the EMRs to finance the above costs. As we have reported in previous years, there is no formal guidance on the level of general reserves that should be retained, as this will vary depending on the circumstances of individual councils and the risks they face, but a yard-stick of between 25% and 50% of the net revenue budget (or Precept) is often cited. The improved position as at 31st March 2025 means that the Council's General Reserve is now above the minimum suggested level - equating to approximately 35% of the net revenue budget for 2025-26.

We note that the 2025-26 budget includes a contribution of just over £70,000 to the overall level of reserves and we understand from our discussions with the Town Clerk that it is the intention to review both the Council's EMRs and General Reserve requirements in the year, which will include consideration of the funds needed to cover future capital expenditure and the establishment of a playground reserve.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Income

Our objective is to assess whether the Council has appropriate procedures in place to ensure that all income due is identified, invoiced (where appropriate), recovered and banked in a timely manner. In addition to the Precept and any specific grants that it obtains, the Council receives income from a number of sources; principally, the cemetery, hire of the Jack Silley Pavilion and Epping Hall, the weekly traders' markets, allotments and events.

During our audits, we confirmed the following:

- *Fees and charges:* The Council continues to review its fees and charges on an annual basis and these are published on the website. The fees and charges for the 2025-26 financial year were approved as part of the budget setting process, at the meeting on 14th January 2025:
- *Cemetery:* We reviewed the burial records and associated documentation for the first half-year, confirming that all required documentation had been obtained and that the invoices subsequently raised were correct and were paid promptly.
- *Hall hire:* We tested the income relating to the hire of the Jack Silley Pavilion and Epping Hall by reference to the Rialtas bookings diary for a sample week (week commencing 17th June 2024), confirming that the bookings records reconciled to the sales invoices raised and that the correct hire fees had been charged and subsequently collected.
- *Allotments:* We reviewed the records maintained in relation to the Council's allotment

sites at Meadow Road and Lower Bury Lane, to confirm that these are up to date. The allotment year commenced on 1st April 2024. For a sample of allotment holders, we confirmed that there were up-to-date signed allotment agreements on file, that rents had been charged in line with the fees advertised on the website and that payment had been received. At the time of our final audit a few rental payments remained outstanding, but we confirmed that these are being actively followed-up.

- Market traders: We reviewed the records relating to one sample market day (14th October 2024), confirming that all regular hirers who are licence holders had been invoiced for the month and that other regular and casual hirers in attendance on that day had been charged the correct fee. We also confirmed, for a sample of the licence holders, that licences are held on file. There were no matters arising.
- Receipt of income: As noted earlier in this report, we checked and agreed a sample of four months' cashbook receipts to the relevant bank statements; and
- Outstanding debts: From a review of the Omega accounts, we confirmed that, as at 31st March 2025, the overall level of outstanding debtors remains low. Effective control arrangements are in place, with appropriate action being taken in relation to the follow-up of outstanding payments.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Salaries and Wages

In examining the Council's payroll function, our objective is to confirm that extant employment legislation is being adhered to, that the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are satisfied regarding the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, and that pension scheme requirements are met.

The Council uses the SAGE system to process payroll. Payments are made directly through the Council's bank account via direct debit. To meet our audit objective, we have undertaken the following:

- For one employee who started in the year, we confirmed that an appropriate contract of employment is in place and has been signed by both parties.
- We agreed the gross amounts paid to all individuals in November 2024, by reference to the Council's approved pay points on the NJC annual schedule of rates payable*.
- For the November payroll we also confirmed that:
 - tax and National Insurance deductions were made by applying the appropriate tax code and NI Table, and that the correct amounts were paid over to HMRC.
 - where relevant, employee and employer contributions to the pension schemes had been correctly determined and paid over to the Essex Pension Fund, or NEST.
 - the net payments due to staff, as recorded on the payslips agreed to the bank transfers.

* The national Local Government Services pay agreement for 2024-25, applicable from 1st April 2024, was agreed in October 2024. The revised pay scales were applied when making

the November salary payments, which also included the back-pay due from 1st April 2024. We confirmed the accuracy of the calculation of the back-pay and that it had been included correctly with the November salary payments.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Petty Cash

As part of our internal audit review and the reporting requirements in the AGAR, we are required to assess the effectiveness of controls over any petty cash accounts in use, ensuring that payments are appropriately supported, that transactions are only made for items connected with the Council's functions and that any recoverable VAT is correctly identified.

During our audits, we confirmed that the petty cash is being reconciled on a regular basis. At our first visit, we also carried out a physical check of the cash balance held, reconciling this to the petty cash ledger and confirming that there was appropriate supporting documentation for all petty cash payments made since the date of the latest reconciliation (which was at the start of November).

At our final audit, we confirmed that the year-end balance has been included correctly in the 'total value of cash and short-term investments' reported in Section 2, Line 8 of the AGAR.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Asset Register

Councils are required to maintain an Asset & Investment Register and to report the overall value of fixed assets and any long-term investments held in the AGAR (Section 2, Box 9). Whilst the "Practitioners' Guide" does not specify a particular basis of accounting for fixed assets, it stresses that the approach taken from year to year should be consistent and that the value of individual assets held should not normally change from one year to another - with the only changes being the inclusion of new assets purchased or removal of assets disposed of. In most cases, assets are recorded at their purchase cost, or at a suitable proxy where that value is not known. However, assets gifted at nil cost or other assets held with no intrinsic value (often referred to as community assets) are normally included at a nominal £1.

Each year, the Council undertakes a review of its asset register just prior to the year-end, to confirm that all changes have been identified. The updated register for 2024-25 was reported to the Council meeting on 11th March 2025. We noted that there was only one acquisition and one disposal in the year. We confirmed that the total cost of assets held, £4,467,960, has been included correctly in Section 2, Line 9 of the AGAR.

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation

Investments and Loans

Our objective is to confirm that an appropriate investment strategy is in place, that any funds not required for immediate use, whether temporarily or on a longer-term basis, are invested in line with that strategy and that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records. We also confirm that any loan repayments due to, or payable by, the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

We have confirmed that:

- At present, the Council does not have any long-term investments (i.e., investments of over 1 year). As noted earlier in the report, the majority of the Council's funds are held in instant access accounts, with about a quarter held in a Nationwide 95-day Saver account.
- As required by the 'Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments', the Council has an Investment Strategy and Policy in place. This was reviewed by the CGAC in October 2024 and approved by the Council on 12th November 2024.
- At the start of the financial year, the Council had five outstanding loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). We confirmed that the half-yearly payments of principal and interest due in the year (made in May and November 2024) agreed to the third party "demand" notices from the UK Debt Management Office. By the year end, two of the loans (both relating to Epping Hall) were fully repaid. At our final audit visit, we confirmed that these payments and the overall loan balance outstanding at the year-end are reported correctly in the AGAR (Section 2, Lines 5 and 10, respectively).

Conclusion

There are no matters arising that require a formal comment or recommendation.

Statement of Accounts and AGAR

We have reviewed the detailed accounting statements prepared by DCK Accounting Solutions Ltd using the RBS Omega system and checked the draft of the statutory "Accounting Statements 2024-25" which the Council is required to complete and approve (Section 2 of the AGAR) to the supporting accounting records and other related documentation.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising from this area of our review that require any formal comment or recommendation. We look forward to receiving a copy of the finalised AGAR (Sections 1 and 2), once the document has been approved by the Council.

On the basis of the work undertaken during the course of our audit for the year, we completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit Report on Page 3 of the AGAR on 28th May 2025. We have assigned positive assurances in relation to all areas of internal control.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2025**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.** It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2024/25

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2025.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2024) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2025).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2025**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	✓	
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025 been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	✓	

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices**, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY Epping Town Council

ENTER PUBLIC WEBSITE ADDRESS www.eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

02/12/2024

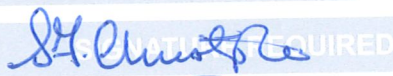
03/03/2025

28/05/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

SF Christopher for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

28/05/2025

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER PUBLICITY Epping Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

10/06/2025

and recorded as minute reference:

Minute # 61 of 2025/26 REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICITY www.eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk SE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

Epping Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	227,098	261,606	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	589,513	621,795	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	261,590	318,300	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	417,372	438,561	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	102,415	83,999	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	296,808	407,965	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	261,606	271,176	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	229,159	260,960	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	4,464,960	4,467,960	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	153,227	75,023	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

B. Rumsby

Date

04/06/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

10/06/2025

as recorded in minute reference:

Minute # 62 of 2025/26

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2024/25

In respect of

Epping Town Council

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2025; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2024/25

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2024/25

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

ENTER NAME OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR

External Auditor Signature

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

ATTACHMENT K1

Internal Audit Analysis 2024-25
By Beverley Rumsey, Town Clerk & RFO

AUDITOR'S COMMENTS

First Interim Report (November 2024)

No issues identified requiring formal comment
No formal recommendations

Second Interim Report (March 2025)

No issues identified requiring formal comment
No formal recommendations

Final Report (May 2025)

No issues identified requiring formal comment
No formal recommendations

The Clerk/RFO would like to thank her team for the work that goes into achieving clean reports.

ATTACHMENT L

Epping Town Council year end financial summary position 2025/26

Expenditure at year end (31/3/25) according to RBS: **£930,525**

Approved budget: £815,132

Income at year end (31/3/25) according to RBS: **£940,095**

Approved budget: £816,195

Budgeted surplus (Jan 2025): £1,063

Final operating budget position (RBS): £9,570 surplus

Increase to general reserves following year end transfers in and out: £53,687

Contributory factors:

- Increased income and expenditure due to skate park
- Interest received higher than budgeted
- Christmas Market sponsorship increased income
- Cemetery income higher than budgeted
- Reduced grounds team salaries due to less staff
- Credits on utility bills

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

Epping Town Council have performed very well against their projected budget for 2024/25.

As always, some cost centres have seen an increase on budget and others a decrease.

The budget has continued to be monitored on a monthly basis and any major issues highlighted, coupled with careful and considered spending, whilst maintaining vital services and functions for our residents and community.

Whilst budget setting in January 2025, Epping Town Council noted the low general reserves and the auditor's recommendation that these are topped up sufficiently moving forwards, to ensure Council can cover the ever increasing costs of running vital services and functions. The reserves still need to be higher than they are, as will be detailed in Council's budget setting paperwork at the end of the year. This was noted by the internal auditor, once again, in the conclusions of his May 2025 report.

"The General Reserve balance at 31st March 2025 stood at £200,895 compared with £147,865 at the previous year end. The increase is due both to the budget underspend and the subsequent transfers from the EMRs to finance the above costs. As we have reported in previous years, there is no formal guidance on the level of general reserves that should be retained, as this will vary depending on the circumstances of individual councils and the risks they face, but a yard-stick of between 25% and 50% of the net revenue budget (or Precept) is often cited. The improved position as at 31st March 2025 means that the Council's General Reserve is

now above the minimum suggested level - equating to approximately 35% of the net revenue budget for 2025-26."

There are a number of known spending requirements in the current financial year and a longer term forecast will be presented during the budget setting process at the end of this year covering 2026-27.

Beverley Rumsey, Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, June 2025

ATTACHMENT M

Little Free Library: Take a Book, Share a Book

- Should be located somewhere easy, such as a roadside or near an existing public building.
- This needs to be somewhere safe, which has a lot of foot traffic and be highly visible to anyone nearby – then identify one person to be the caretaker. They promote the library and makes sure it is clean and inviting.
- Build the library in any design, can be built by others/bought from the website. These come with a charter sign included and are automatically registered into the LFL system.
- If not bought from LFL, we can register the library with them ourselves. Others nearby include Chingford, Buckhurst Hill and Edmonton.

One design example



Costs vary between 300 and 500 dollars if bought from the website. Could be made by a carpenter. Cost likely to be similar, maybe more.

Epping Hall pumps

The pumps at Epping Hall have not been working properly for some time. Drainstore attended in 2020 and did some remedial works but the system is now failing. Of the 2 crude pumps and 2 storm water pumps, only 1 crude pump is working. The Town Supervisor and his team have managed to unblock the system as a very short term remedial measure, but if these are not replaced the toilets at Epping Hall will stop working. At the time of writing, the Town Clerk is waiting for the quotation for works, but expects it to be £3000-£5000. This has been discussed with the Key Member for Epping Hall, Cllr H Pegrum and the Key Member for Finance, Cllr G Scruton. These are essential works that must be undertaken. Once the quotation from Drainstore (who fully understand the issue as they have worked on it previously) is received, it will be shared with the Key Members detailed and we will need to proceed. Unfortunately, Epping Hall is 26 and many of its original operating parts are getting older and ineffective.