

Select Committee Agenda



Stronger Place Select Committee Tuesday, 15th March, 2022

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Stronger Place Select Committee**, which will be held at:

Council Chamber - Civic Offices
on **Tuesday, 15th March, 2022**
at **7.00 pm** .

Georgina Blakemore
Chief Executive

**Democratic Services
Officer**

Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors R Bassett, S Heather, I Hadley, S Heap, J Jennings, C McCredie, R Morgan (Vice-Chairman), R Balcombe, A Lion (Chairman), M Owen and J Share-Bernia

SUBSTITUTE NOMINATION DEADLINE: 6.00PM

WEBCASTING NOTICE

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You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy and copies made available to those that request it.

Therefore by entering the Chamber and using the lower public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for web casting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the upper council chamber public gallery area

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Corporate Communications Manager on 01992 564039.

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking. The Chairman will read the following announcement:

“The Chairman would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet (or filmed) and will be capable of repeated viewing (or another use by such third parties).

If you are seated in the lower public seating area it is likely that the recording cameras will capture your image and this will result in the possibility that your image will become part of the broadcast.

This may infringe your human and data protection rights and if you wish to avoid this you should move to the upper public gallery.”

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Please use the Members Portal webpage to report non-attendance at meetings https://eppingforestdc-self.achieveservice.com/service/Member_Contact to ensure your query is properly logged.

Alternatively, you can access the Members portal from the front page of the Council's website, at the bottom under 'Contact Us' <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/your-council/members-portal/>

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

5. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 10)

- a) To agree the notes of the meeting of the Select Committee held on 13 January 2022.
- b) To note the updated information in relation to:
 - i. Minute 34: The business case for charging for additional waste containers and prioritising repairs over replacements will be fully developed and form part of the Cabinet report for July 2022. This initiative will be implemented within existing budgets and resources.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 11 - 14)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference and work programme for this select committee. Members are invited at each meeting to review both documents.

7. TRANSPORT STRATEGY AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT (Pages 15 - 18)

To consider and comment on the Transport Strategy and Sustainable Transport update report.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

This is the last meeting for this municipal year.

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee:	Stronger Place Select Committee	Date:	Thursday, 13 January 2022
Place:	Council Chamber - Civic Offices	Time:	7.00 - 9.10 pm
Members Present:	Councillors A Lion (Chairman), R Morgan (Vice-Chairman), R Balcombe, I Hadley, M Owen and C McCredie		
Members Present Virtually	Councillors R Bassett, S Heather, S Heap, J Jennings and J Share-Bernia		
Other Members Present	Councillors N Bedford, C Whitbread, H Whitbread and L Burrows		
Other Members Present Virtually	Councillors N Avey, S Kane A Patel, D Sunger R Brookes M Sartin and J H Whitehouse		
Apologies for absence:	None		
Officers Present	N Dawe (Chief Operating Officer), L Kirman (Democratic Services Officer), and P Seager (Chairman's Officer)		
Officers Present Virtually:	S Devine (Service Manager (Regulatory)), J Houston (Specialist Partnerships & Economic Development), D Marsh (Waste Management Team Manager), A Marx (Development Manager Service Manager (Planning)), P Messenger (Town Centres Project Manager), V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer) N Richardson (Service Director (Planning Services)),P Smith (Building Control and Asset Manager), M Thompson (Service Manager (Technical)) and J Warwick (Acting Service Director (Contracts))		

27. Webcasting Introduction

The Chairman made a short address to remind everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet, and would be capable of repeated viewing, which could infringe their human and data protection rights.

28. Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members at the meeting.

29. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

30. Notes of Previous Meeting

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

31. Terms of Reference & Work Programme

The Select Committee noted their terms of reference and work programme.

32. Town Centre Report

The Town Centre report was introduced by John Houston, Specialist Partnerships & Economic Development, who highlighted that the district was performing strongly. Paul Messenger, Town Centre Programme Manager gave a detailed presentation to the Committee, which provided context around changing high streets, how EFDC high streets were performing, the town centre action plan, completed works, current initiatives and the importance of, and approach to, partnerships for the future of town centres and high streets.

The Committee:

- Queried the outcomes of the initiatives and what success would look like. They were advised that the programme had been linked to promoting the high streets, this included matched funding for Christmas lights and events, and supporting businesses through the pandemic. The outcomes of the initiatives had not been measured but the outputs included: the administration of over £450,000 of Essex business adaption grants which allowed business to trade safely through the Covid Pandemic and £232,0000 'welcome back' government funding to keep high streets safe, vibrant and active. 90 businesses had sign up to 'loyal free' and 'click it local' had 230 businesses. Success could be measured through: vacancy rates, which were well below national average in EFDC; churn, which was high for start-ups; footfall, which would be measured in the near future; and attractiveness of the high street.
- Suggested that smaller rural parades of shops should not be forgotten and stressed the importance and value of independent local shops.
- Suggested that short term lets for start-ups or pop ups to nurture innovation and new businesses could be beneficial.

Clarification was provided on the following points:

- The parklet in Waltham Abbey was part of a government funded programme for a temporary space with planting and benches for use in the Market Square.
- A market policy was being developed for high streets and town centres as this was required for licensing purposes.
- That funds allocated from Covid grants had specific criteria for spend.
- Many banks and national chains were rationalising their presence on the high streets. Cllr H Whitbread advised the Committee that Chief Executive of Next had informed her that Epping Next had closed in line with their business model and move towards larger stores, she had raised the community aspects of smaller stores which could act as an anchor on the high street.
- There was a need to work in partnership and ensure communication with Town and Parish Councils, town partnerships and businesses.
- The Town Centre programme had been reactive through the pandemic and services had been delivered by a wide range of services across the council.
- The next steps would involve a longer term plan for the district based around several strategic aims.

Resolved:

That the Committee considered and commented on the Town Centre Report.

33. Enforcement Review

Cllr Burrows introduced the Enforcement Review, thanked officers for their input. He highlighted the potential costs of £250,000 for the implementation of a system for environmental health and technical enforcement, and developing enforcement of parking at key junctions, footpaths and areas outside school in partnership with NEPP and ECC as key aspects. Nick Dawe (Chief Operating Officer) advised the Committee that planning enforcement was outside the remit of this review. The focus was on actions that were, in the main, immediate and low cost, and included outline plans for improved technology which could be brought forward in two stages. He reminded the Committee that there were many aspects to enforcement activity and recourse to legal action was the last resort.

The Committee:

- Sought clarity on the quantification of costs associated with the development of the IT system and were advised that the interim stage had been fully costed and was included in the budget, the wider system which would integrate with planning and the HRA was unknown, and the business case for this could be brought to this Select Committee
- Queried the provision of legal resources and the technical ability of officers in compiling suitable evidence for prosecution. All officers were aware of PACE and operated to the relevant regulations, some work was required in relation to legal service provision.
- Suggested that the lack of feedback to the complainant, who then engaged members and the feedback loop to members was a key issue. Members needed to be given access to information and progress on specific cases. They were cognisant of the confidentiality aspects of enforcement cases which could be critical to a successful outcome. The Committee were advised that the key aspect of the proposal was that enforcement activity was coordinated and fed back to members.
- Questioned the increase in 'rat runs' through the enforcement at junctions, parking obstructing footpaths and schools. A comprehensive approach was needed to be taken, to avoid increasing the speed and amount of traffic through the cleared areas, and to ensure that air quality was considered.
- Queried the system for ensuring planning conditions were met, Andrew Marx confirmed, it was not practical for them to be actively monitored, due to the large numbers and advised that there was a 10 year period when breaches could be dealt with, there was a clear link on the website to report alleged breaches. Consultees were advised that the decision notice and conditions would be available on the website, and the service received regular allegations of breaches of conditions. In addition solicitors often wanted confirmation that conditions had been adhered to. He reminded members to contact him directly if they had any specific queries.
- Asked about costs incurred and recovered. They were advised that the same costs would be incurred for some actions, but the process should become more efficient. In general terms the enforcement costs would be sought from those at fault. For planning when direct action was taken, the costs could be charged back to the transgressor and this was explicit in the new enforcement plan.
- The Committee were advised that site visits were restricted at the height of the pandemic and a standardised risk assessment, based on the LABC template, was now in place to ensure Covid safety and reduce any impact on site visits.

Due to technical difficulties Cllr Whitehouse would be provided with a written response to her queries in relation to the meaning of DDA, and the requirement for two members of staff to provide reports to members.

The Committee suggested that the scope and all activity should be included in further iterations of the report

The Committee would welcome a future report on the costs and benefits associated with the integrated IT system, with an implementation programme and the delivery of outcomes.

Resolved:

That the Committee considered and commented on the Enforcement Review.

34. Additional Waste Container Costs

James Warwick (Acting Service Director) advised the Committee that this proposal had been referred to this Committee by the Waste Management Partnership Board, and further to the recommendations of this Committee would be submitted to Cabinet for approval. The paper outlined the proposal that residents were charged for: the assessment, issuing and delivery of additional garden waste bins; the assessment, issuing and delivery of larger waste bins; replacement bin cost when the bin had been lost; and noted that repairs to bins would be the preferential option and remain free of charge. These proposals would reduce costs and increase efficiencies, as there was a constant demand for additional waste containers. The paper also addressed a misnomer and suggested that the additional food and garden bins (AF&GB) were renamed 'garden waste bin'.

The Committee received confirmation that the charges for residents were in relation to additional bins only, and requested clarity on a number of aspects of the report:-

- Only bins embossed with the Council logo would be collected by the contractor. Alternative bins sourced by individuals were often substandard and could easily fracture, they could also impact and damage the lifting mechanisms on refuse vehicles.
- Costs detailed were based on the recharge of bin costs, the charge of delivery and time for the officer assessment.
- There was no charge for additional bins required for medical waste, incontinence pads were classified as non-hazardous medical waste, and this was covered under the current medical waste policy.
- Nappies were not classified as medical waste and were included in the household refuse collection, an assessment was made after a request for a larger bins in an attempt to drive recyclable materials in to the appropriate waste stream.
- Broken bins would be stripped for parts and the broken element would be recycled.
- Number stickers could be provided or numbers painted onto bins for ease of identification.
- Operatives should ensure bins were return to where they were taken from avoid bins going missing.

The Committee

- Raised concerns raised about charges for larger bins for families and discussed if there should be some discretion in the policy.
- Suggested that a move to real nappies, could reduce the total amount of waste and detailed that Love Essex had a real nappy initiative.
- Requested that replacement bins should be cleaned before being reissued.
- Acknowledged the good service from Biffa.
- Requested a tour of the Biffa facility for members and discussed the potential of a virtual recorded tour, but agreed that an in person tour would be more beneficial to members.
- Suggested additional clarity on financial aspects associated with proposal, including proportion of new bins to replacement bins, costs of administration and management of the repair service.

Resolved:

That the Committee considered and commented on the proposal for the introduction of charging for additional and replacement waste containers to be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

35. Dates of Future Meetings

The date of the next meeting was noted as 15 March 2022 at 7:00pm

CHAIRMAN

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STRONGER PLACE SELECT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE 2021/22

Definition of Stronger “Place” Select (Scrutiny) Committee

To consider Epping Forest District as a physical Place and to scrutinise the direction, policies and projects of the executive that affect the spatial and infrastructure requirements of the Epping Forest District.

The Committees Areas of Responsibility (Scope)

To consider the impact on customers, residents, businesses and visitors to our District, and to respond to consultation activities.

Sources of Information

Epping Forest DC Corporate Plan 2018-2023

Local Plan Submission Version, including Main Modifications.

Departmental Business Plans

Cabinet Corporate Aims and Objective 2021/22

Cabinet Work Programme 1 July to 31 October 2021

Key Objectives

1. To develop a work programme each year that effectively scrutinises the areas of responsibility outlined above.
2. To engage in policy review and development, with a focus on improvement and how this can be best achieved.
3. To consider any matter referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder and to make recommendations as appropriate.
4. To establish working groups and task and finish panels to undertake any activity within the terms of reference.
5. To undertake pre-scrutiny through the review of specific proposals of the Council and its partner organisations or other local service providers to help develop policy.
6. To engage with the community and encourage community engagement.
7. District Wide Management Contracts and provide scrutiny of services that are not performing to standard and develop proposals for their improvement.
8. To monitor and review relevant projects and associated closure and benefits reports.

To provide scrutiny for the following corporate projects:

1. Local Plan Delivery, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, S106 Agreements, associated parking
2. Epping Centre Development - St. Johns Road
3. North Weald airfield development (including master-planning)

4. Council Housebuilding
5. Economic growth, skills and employment
6. District Wide Waste Management Provision

To have overview of the green agenda – helping to inform policy and future proofing the Place.

To maintain an awareness of the impact of relevant external policies and partners.

**Stronger Place Select Committee
Work Programme 2021/22**

Stronger Place Corporate Programme Alignment focuses on corporate objectives and our response to Covid-19 recovery.

No.	Item	Deadline	Progress and Comments	Member /Officer	Programme of Meetings
1	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) – Transport Strategy	tbc	To be considered by O& S 18 Nov 2021		22Jun-2021 23-Sept-2021 4-Nov-2021 13-Jan-2022 15-Mar-2022
2	Local Plan	tbc	Update on Main Modifications		
3	Branding of the Ground Floor of the Civic Offices	23 Sept 2021	COMPLETED		
4	PAH & Whipps Cross	13 Jan 2022	MOVE TO O & S		
5	Waste Management	4 Nov 2021	Contract/service options and retender -COMPLETED	J Warwick	
6	Off-Street Car Park Tariff Review	4 Nov 2021	COMPLETED	J Warwick	
6	Littering	tbc	Consider littering across the District		
7	District Wide Leisure Services Development		Further to discussion at O & S 12 Oct 2021 (minute no 47 and 49) this item will be discussed at the next joint meeting in January 2022.		
8	Town Centre Progress Report	13 Jan 2022	COMPLETED	John Houston	
9	Public Transport services including Taxis.	15 Mar 2022			
10	Traffic control, Cycle Lanes, Electric Scooters. Electric charging	15 Mar 2022			
11	Highways.	tbc	Covered by item 18		
12	Country Care	tbc			
13	Land Drainage	tbc			
14	Flooding and SuDS	tbc	Dependency on several agencies: Environment Agency/Highway		
15	Tree Preservation.	tbc			
16	Climate Change		Considered by O & S		

17	Enforcement	13 Jan 2022	COMPLETED Report from Cllr Burrows		
18	Essex Highways	4 Nov 2021	External update form ECC Portfolio Holder _COMPLETED		
19	Waste management	13 January 2022	COMPLETED Additional waste container costs	James Warwick	



Report to to Stronger Place Select Committee

Date of meeting: March 2022

Portfolio: Environment and Technical Services

Subject: Transport Strategy and Sustainability a Strategic Overview and Status Update

Officer contact for further information: Stephen Lloyd Jones (01992 562414)

Democratic Services Officer: Laura Kirman (01992 564243)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That Members consider and comment on the report.

Report:

1. Off-street EV Charging

EFDC is working hard to maximise use of its own land and assets to provide EV charging:

- **Rapid 120kWh chargers supplied by Instavolt** - coming very soon at Oakwood Hill East car park, Loughton IG10 3TZ. Among the fastest in Essex and ideal for anyone on the go, but especially higher local mileage residents and businesses (taxis, minicabs and businesses with a light commercial van fleet). Crater development is adjacent for Costa and food plus our popular MoT station, so users can charge up after their test.
- **Pilot of conversion of empty garages to EV charging bays** - We are applying for a grant from [OZEV/ORCS](#) scheme to convert empty garages in the Ninefields estate Waltham Abbey to 'fast' or overnight neighbourhood charging spaces. We think it is unfair that only those who can afford homes with off street parking and access to things like higher rate tax breaks account for most new EV purchases.
- **EV Charging at other car parks** - within the next 2-3 years, we should see a number of other car parks including those at Leisure Centres, with fast or overnight charging facilities. Most do not have the available power supply for rapid chargers, but they can plug the cost and speed gap between 'premium' rapid chargers and charging using your domestic power supply.
- **EV charging built into major new developments** – starting with Epping's Qualis developments, we will see public EV charging in the multi-storey car park and then in all major housing schemes across the District, some open to non-residents.
- **Coming at little or no cost to residents** – Instavolt's business model generates site rental and profit share for EFDC and involves no upfront costs for survey, installation etc. All the other proposals above involve grant funding and/or Section 106 contributions from developers or other match funding sources.
- **Electrifying our own fleet** – fleet vehicle charging is available at all our sites and we currently have switched 30 vehicles to electric or plug-in hybrid models

- **Reviewing Tenant guidelines** – a number of requests for EV charging facilities (including Motability users) mean a review of best practice is needed, balancing parking pressures, resident sentiment and the need to encourage switching to EV.
- **Communication with residents** – web page with a summary of the updates above is now live under Parking & Travel, plus an enquiries email to register interest

2. On-street EV Charging

- This is the responsibility of Essex County Council. They are still finalising their strategy in this area but one thing unlikely in Essex is the use of streetlights to supply overnight EV charging.
- EFDC has joined ECC's multi-District on-street charging bid to [OZEV/ORCS](#) which could see up to six on-street charging bays in the District, with sites in Loughton, Chigwell, Epping and Buckhurst Hill proposed.
- Ongoing dialogue with ECC and providers to establish the true number of charging points of all types needed in the next 4-5 years and beyond - the sum total of measures above is well below the likely need: for example counties such as Kent and West Sussex have firm plans to see 5-7k chargers live over this period.

3. Licensed minicab engagement (conversion to EV)

- Switching to EV is in many ways ideal for the taxi and minicab trade – high local mileage, lower running and maintenance costs, less to go wrong, proven in the London market (black cab and minicab/Uber). However, we needed to run a survey of the EFDC licensed base to understand the incentives and barriers to switching as EV minicabs are still a rarity in Essex.
 - Whilst non plug-in hybrid vehicles are common (36%), diesel is the fuel of choice for 51% and plug-in hybrid and EV are almost non-existent.
 - Almost all vehicles are kept at home overnight, but 56% have no viable way to charge at home (this appears much higher than the general population)
 - Even pre-Covid, 80% of drivers were doing average daily mileages well within the range of a modern EV in a fully charged state although the typical “very busy” day pre-Covid would have likely meant a topup charge during the day for around 45%
 - A quarter had considered or are considering switching to EV
 - Across all respondents, the main benefits of EV were seen as: low running and maintenance costs, high reliability and avoidance of ULEZ type charges
 - The main barriers to adoption were unaffordable initial acquisition costs, lack of public charging points and range anxiety
 - If a way were found to soften the blow of upfront cost, the % prepared to switch to EV went up to 30% with a further 30% unsure
 - Up to 900 black cab drivers live locally – LTDA (membership body) has helped analysis with driver location data and will help publicise rapid charger launch
 - NEXT STEPS – review at March Licensing Committee: consider tariff increase to help make switch easier? Especially as trade has suffered during the Covid crisis.

3. DaRT87 Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) trial – ends March 22

- Background: Launched Jan 2021 as emergency 'hybrid' Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) following the cessation of subsidy by Essex CC of Arriva's 87 bus service. This saw a 60%+ drop in passengers during 2020 phases of the pandemic and was costing EFDC £100k per year subsidy alongside ECC. A decision was taken to run a three-month trial (@£26k) from 1/1/21 and then 12m (@£85k, minus returned fare revenue).

- Summary of progress to date: Very difficult trading conditions due to: Lockdowns and slow recovery of bus usage; lack of confidence in buses among concessionary pass holders; major reduction in 5 day per week tube commuting; school/college disruptions; marketing reach.
- Positives: 1,096 viewers of website leading to 178 online registrations of interest ytd (16%). Examples of 'lifeline' users (NHS staff/users & others). Good/reliable service. We provided a 'supplier of last resort' solution in a lower carbon way than empty conventional buses.
- Negatives: conversion of 'interest' to actual usage is low; fare revenue returned to EFDC is well below estimates @2%-3% of running costs; EFCT are constrained on vehicles, driver availability (incl covid impacts) and due to covid bus regulations had max occupancy of 6 passengers for long periods.
- Learnings: 33%+ of interest is from SW Harlow residents (desire to get to our tube stations and educational sites); Epping Green shows highest % residents expressing interest (rural isolation); Unclear whether elderly are comfortable with approach (no evidence of others having problems except pre-booking disliked)
- NEXT STEPS – Cabinet decision whether to continue for another year; refresh marketing now that we are emerging from pandemic conditions; possible route reductions to increase frequency on highest demand portion of route (Harlow-Epping Green-Epping/station)

3. ECC & Highways

- Meeting is scheduled for 9 March 2022 with ECC and the Conservators to finish scoping out the development of an updated Transport Strategy for the Epping Forest.
- Ride London and local lobbying appears to have brought EFDC area back into ECC focus for cycling infrastructure review and improvement using the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) methodology covering SW areas adjacent to GLA boundary – budget needed

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