



EPPING FOREST LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF MEETING

Place: Civic Offices **Date:** Thursday 21st September 2023

Room: Council Chamber **Time:** 7.00 pm

Democratic Services Officer: G Woodhall
Tel:
(01992) 564243
Email:
democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

District Council Representatives:

Councillors R Bassett, H Kane, J Lea, R Morgan, D Sunger, J H Whitehouse.

Local Council Representatives:

Clerks and Chairmen/Members of Parish and Town Councils

County Council Representatives:

Members for the following divisions:

North Weald and Nazeing:	Councillor C Whitbread
Loughton Central:	Councillor C C Pond
Ongar and Rural:	Councillor J McIvor
Epping and Theydon Bois:	Councillor H Whitbread
Buckhurst Hill and Loughton South:	Councillor M Vance
Chigwell and Loughton Broadway:	Councillor L Scott
Waltham Abbey:	Councillor S Kane

PLEASE NOTE THE START TIME OF THE MEETING

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

1. This virtual meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to unmute before speaking.

2. The Chairman will read the following announcement:

"I 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 other such use by third parties).

Therefore, by participating in this virtual meeting, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured then they should ensure that their video setting throughout the virtual meeting is turned off and set to audio only.

In the event that technical difficulties interrupt the virtual meeting that cannot be overcome, the meeting may need to be adjourned".

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN & VICE-CHAIRMAN

- (1) To confirm the appointment of District Councillor D Sunger as the Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year, in his capacity as Chairman of the District Council; and
- (2) To confirm the appointment of Town Councillor C Burgess as the Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year, in her capacity as the Chairman of the Epping Forest branch of the Essex Association of Local Councils.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

EFDC Councillors - 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/>

Members, county councillors, and town/parish council representatives are reminded to sign the attendance register, in order to ensure that the minutes of the meeting accurately reflect attendance.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 18)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 March 2023 and any matters arising therefrom.

5. EPPING FOREST LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL - NEW STRUCTURE

(Cllr S Kane, Chairman of the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel) To notify Town and Parish Councils of the new arrangements for the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel.

The rules concerning the Local Highways Panels had changed at Essex County Council and a discussion had taken place on how the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel should operate in the future. A number of options had been considered and it

was decided that no Town or Parish Council representative should be invited to future meetings, and that any representations from Town or Parish Councils should be directed through their Essex County Councillor.

6. ECC CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT - CLLR LEE SCOTT

(Cllr Lee Scott, ECC Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport)

To provide an update on his plans for the future of Highways in the County, and to address any areas of general concern that Parish and Town Councils may have, including the following items outstanding from the meeting of the Committee held on 5 October 2022 when Cllr Scott gave his apologies:

- The efficacy of the Local Highways Panel and the adequacy of budgets provided to them.
- The prime remit of Local Highway Panels
- What (if any) options are available for introducing traffic calming measures on rural country roads?
- The contract with Ringway Jacobs, how long this is in place for, when it is due for renewal, and whether or not they offer value for taxpayers' money?

7. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS

To discuss the following matters raised by the local councils:

(a) At the meeting held on 28 March 2023, Town and Parish Councils were advised paper copies of the Local Plan would **NOT** be printed, and that a copy of the whole document was available on the council's website, with papers copies available to look through at local library's and at the Civic Offices. There are some parishes in the District where access to a local library is not possible unless visiting a neighbouring village or town, or in areas where there is a library it may be open limited hours. It is understood that the rationale for EFDC not providing Parish and Town Councils with a hard copy of the local plan is simply one of cost. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill supports communities having more say over planning matters, and it should be recognised that providing Parish and Town Councils with a hard copy of the local plan would support this agenda and provide for increased opportunities for residents in the district by providing this additional facility. In addition, some Parish Councils are very small, with limited printing capacity. We therefore ask the District Council to reconsider providing each of the 24 Parish and Town Councils in the District with one hard copy of the Local Plan Part 1, Part 2, and Policies Map.

(b) Request that the Cllr Nigel Bedford, EFDC Portfolio Holder for Place, provides members with an update on who the Officers are on the Planning Policy and Implementation Team, and their respective roles.

(c) EFDC has indicated they will not provide training on the new planning system (Arcus) to Parish and Town Councils, despite this being requested on numerous

occasions. As such, can EFDC answer the following:

- (i) Does the new system allow a user of the site to identify which properties / who has been consulted on a planning application. If so, can you demonstrate how this can be done. If it cannot, why not?
- (ii) The previous system allowed a user to search for the history of a particular property by using the 'file number'. Can this be done on the new system, and can it be demonstrated how. If it cannot, why not?
- (iii) Would EFDC be willing to commit to a 2 hour online tutorial with parish and town councils, showcasing the benefits of the new system and how it operates?
- (d) The weekly planning list is normally distributed on a Friday afternoon, however there are occasions when this does not take place (due staff holiday, etc). On these occasions, could arrangements be made for another staff member to distribute the weekly list on a Friday afternoon to ensure continuity.
- (e) Branch Members would like to invite the new Chairman of the Qualis Group to attend the meeting and provide an update on the Qualis organisation, how it supports the functions of EFDC, his role and responsibilities, and how he will improve openness and transparency for the council tax paying residents in the district.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To note that the next meeting of the Committee will be held on 1 February 2024 at 7.00pm.