

# EPPING FOREST LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE

## NOTICE OF MEETING

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping      **Date:** Wednesday, 21st June, 2006

**Room:** Council Chamber      **Time:** 7.30 pm

**Democratic Services Officer:** Adrian Hendry (tel: 01992 564246)  
Email: ahendry@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

### **Members:**

#### **District Council Representatives:**

Councillors Mrs A Haigh (Chairman), R Morgan, Mrs C Pond, B Sandler and Mrs J H Whitehouse

#### **Local Council Representatives:**

Clerks and Chairmen/Members of Parish and Town Councils

#### **County Council Representatives:**

Members for the following wards:

North Weald and Nazeing:	Councillor A Jackson
Loughton Central:	Councillor C Pond
Ongar and Rural:	Councillor G McEwen
Epping and Theydon Bois:	Councillor T Spencer
Buckhurst Hill and Loughton South:	Councillor C Finn
Chigwell and Loughton Broadway:	Councillor M Tomkins
Waltham Abbey:	Councillor Mrs E Webster

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#### PLEASE NOTE :

COFFEE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS OF THE LIAISON COMMITTEE FROM 7.00 P.M. IN THE MEMBERS ROOM.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

#### **2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE - CHAIRMAN**

(a) District Councillor Ann Haigh was confirmed as the Chairman of the Committee for the Civic Year.

(b) Parish Councillor J Salter was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Civic Year.

**3. MINUTES**

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 1 March 2006 (previously circulated) and matters arising.

**4. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS**

To discuss the following matters raised by Local Council's:

**(a) Community Bus Service**

Local representatives have requested a discussion on the Community Bus Service and the desirability of extending the scheme. Angela Canham of Voluntary Action Epping Forest will be in attendance to report and answer questions.

**(b) East of England Plan**

Local Councils have requested that consideration be given to this issue as the Inspector's report on the East on England Plan is due for publication this month.

**(c) EFDC Local Plan**

Local Councils have requested that consideration is given to the EFDC Local Plan as the Inspectors report may be out and available for consideration by the date of this meeting.

**(d) Local Development Framework**

Local representatives have requested that consideration is given to the recent consultation document on the new Local Development Framework.

**(e) Development Control – Performance Targets**

Local Members have expressed the view that the drive to satisfy the 8-week target is having a negative impact on the quality of decisions and service to both applicants and objectors. Examples have been given of planning decisions being made peremptorily without time being given to make minor amendments that could have led to agreement between both sides. There is concern that the emphasis on enforcement has lessened (because it is not a national target) and the backlog of cases is as bad as before. It was recognised that several serious cases have and are taking up a lot of time with insufficient capacity to deal with mundane issues. Councils would like to know the current backlog and recent rate of clearance as well as a forecast as to when an acceptable balance might be reached.

**(f) Refuse Collection – Current Position**

At the last meeting of the Committee on 1 March 2006, representatives expressed concern over performance in this area. This further discussion will enable officers to brief Members on the latest developments.

**5. STRUCTURE OF AREA PLANNING SUB - COMMITTEES**

**Recommendation:**

To consider and submit comments to the District Council Scrutiny Review of the Area Planning Sub – Committees.

(Head of Research and Democratic Services). The Constitutional Affairs Scrutiny Panel of the District Council has been reviewing its Area Plans Sub Committees from a number of different viewpoints:

- (a) to achieve involvement of all members of the District Council as members of Area Plans Subs;
- (b) to balance workloads between the four Area Plans Sub Committees better;
- (c) to review the areas covered by each Sub Committee; and
- (d) to establish whether changes to the structure of area Plans Sub Committees can assist the Council in achieving its Best Value performance indicator targets for processing planning applications.

This review is still in progress but the Standing Scrutiny Panel with responsibility for the review has asked the Liaison Committee whether there should be three rather than four Area plans Sub Committees. The Panel is in favour of this option in principle on grounds of assisting with achieving service performance targets and equalising Sub Committee workloads.

There is still to be consideration given to the following:

- (a) the areas of the three Sub Committees
- (b) the memberships of the three Sub Committees
- (c) the possibility of the local nature of these sub Committees being changed.

Views from local councils on those points would also be welcomed.

The District Council is looking at implementing changes during the current year or at the latest from 2007/8.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Meetings of the Committee are scheduled for the following dates this year:

2 November 2005  
1 March 2006