

EPPING FOREST LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF MEETING

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices,
High Street, Epping **Date:** Wednesday, 13th June, 2007

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 C Pond (Chairman), J Knapman, R Morgan, B Sandler and Mrs M Sartin

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 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

**PLEASE NOTE THE START DATE OF THE MEETING
COFFEE/TEA WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FROM 7.00
P.M IN THE MEMBERS ROOM**

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE - CHAIRMAN**

Decision Required:

- (1) To confirm the appointment of District Councillor Mrs C Pond as the Chairman of the Committee for the Civic year
- (2) To appoint a Vice – Chairman of the Committee for the Civic Year

3. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 7 March 2007 (previously circulated).

4. HIGHWAY ISSUES (Pages 5 - 8)

(Essex County Council). Tony Ciaburro, the Service Director for Highways and Transportation and Councillor Norman Hume, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, will be attending this meeting to discuss local highway related issues.

Local Representatives have raised a number of questions for consideration. These are attached.

5. COMMUNITY FUNDS INITIATIVE

Recommendation:

To consider and endorse the recommendations of the Community Funds Initiative Working Group to be reported orally.

Local Councils to report.

6. CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME

Recommendation:

To receive a presentation from the District Council's Assistant Head of Housing (Operations) on the operation of the local Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

The implementation of a Choice Based Lettings Scheme is necessary in order to meet the requirements of Government that such a scheme be in place by 2010 at the latest.

Under a Choice Based Lettings scheme, all vacant social rented properties would be advertised to applicants on the Housing Register in a two-weekly publication, website, and other media giving details of location, type, rent, service charge, council tax band and landlord of the available accommodation. Applicants would apply for a property by "expressing an interest" either in person, by post, telephone, text, email or Internet. Limits to the number of "expressions" per applicant would be in place, which would include restricting "expressions" for properties to those households, which only have an assessed need for a particular property type.

At the end of the two weekly cycle, the Council would analyse the "expressions of interests" received and allocate each property following a prioritisation and selection process in accordance with its own Allocations Scheme. In general terms, the property would be offered to the applicant in the highest band, who has been registered the longest, who had "expressed an interest" for the specific vacancy. The results of the "expressions of interest" on each property advertised is then published in the next periodic publication, setting out the number received on each property, as well as the Band and registration date of the successful applicant. This helps applicants to see how long the successful applicant has been waiting and gives greater transparency in the allocation of accommodation, as each applicant would be

able to clearly understand how the scheme works.

The Government encourages authorities to work in partnership and has made grants available to assist with set up costs based on a bidding process. The Council took the lead in setting up the Herts and Essex Housing Options Consortium (HEHOC), which is a partnership of the following authorities:

- Brentwood Borough Council
- Chelmsford Borough Council
- Broxbourne District Council
- Uttlesford District Council
- East Herts District Council
- Epping Forest District Council

Following the submission of a successful bid to the Government, HEHOC received a grant of £96,000. Around £60,000 of the grant is funding a Consultant to Project Manage the implementation of the scheme, which will be managed by an external Choice Based Lettings Agency. The balance of the grant will go towards the set up costs.

Any Choice Based Lettings Scheme must be developed in a way that takes into account the needs of vulnerable groups. This would involve close liaison with Social Care and a wide-range of partner agencies, ensuring that vulnerable people are able to participate fully in any scheme.

The Assistant Head of Housing (Operations) will explain how the scheme works in more detail.

7. GRAFFITI CLEARANCE IN EPPING FOREST DISTRICT (Pages 9 - 12)

Recommendation:

To consider and comment on the attached document on the need for a new approach to Graffiti Clearance in the District.

(District Council) Epping Forest District Council introduced a graffiti policy in 2000 with the aim of removing of all graffiti reported by residents, staff and members. Unfortunately this has created a limitless demand, which as a consequence has proved very difficult to match with available funding.

Consequently, the Town and Parish Councils are being consulted on a change of approach. The Council is in the middle of reviewing its policy to restrict removal work to property owned by the Council. A draft copy of the document is attached. The meeting is asked to give their views on this document.

8. EPPING FOREST DISTRICT CITIZEN OF THE YEAR - LOCAL AWARDS SCHEME

Recommendation:

To consider ideas for the creation of a local Citizen of the Year Scheme

(Local Councils) At the last meeting, consideration was given to the proposal to award

people who make a significant contribution to their local community. It was noted that whilst the Citizen of the Year Award scheme acknowledges work at the District level, there was no provision for honouring contributions at a more parish level. Members are asked to consider ideas for taking this forward.

9. PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE - LAUNCH OF THE PLANNING WHITE PAPER (Pages 13 - 14)

To consider the attached letter concerning the launch of the planning white paper.

10. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS

No further issues have been raised for this meeting.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

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

28 November 2007
26 March 2008