

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 9 March 2011 **Time:** 7.30 - 8.50 pm

Place: Council Chamber, Civic
Offices, High Street, Epping

**Members
Present:**

Representing Epping Forest District Council:

Councillor(s): Mrs A Grigg (Chairman) and J M Whitehouse

Other Councillors:

Councillor(s):

Representing Essex County Council:

County Councillor(s): G McEwen, C Pond, and Mrs J Whitehouse

Representing Local Councils:

Councillor R Balcombe (Fyfield Parish Council), Councillor Mrs D Borton (Nazeing Parish Council), Councillor Ms J Bowerman (Matching Parish Council), Councillor Mrs N Bridge (Fyfield Parish Council), Mrs K Canning (Chigwell Parish Council), Councillor G Castle (Nazeing Parish Council), Councillor J Filby (Lambourne Parish Council), Councillor C Hawkins (North Weald Bassett Parish Council), Councillor Mrs S Jackman (Ongar Town Council), Councillor B Miller (Epping Upland Parish Council), Councillor Miss H Nicholas (Roydon Parish Council), Councillor Mrs P Smith (Epping Upland Parish Council), Mrs E Walsh (Loughton Town Council), B Whittome (Epping Town Council)

Apologies: **Epping Forest District Council –**

Councillor(s): K Angold-Stephens, R Morgan, and B Sandler

Essex County Council –

Councillor(s): J Knapman, Mrs V Metcalfe and Mrs E Webster

Parish/Town Councils: -

V Evans (Epping Upland Parish Council), D Harris (Sheering Parish Council) B Surtees (Ongar Town Council), and Councillor Mrs L Wagland (Chigwell Parish Council)

**Officers
Present:**

D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), K Durrani (Assistant Director (Technical)), P Millward (Business Manager), P Sewell (Democratic Services Assistant) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

By Invitation: D Vernazza (ONS – Office of National Statistics)

30. PARISH COUNCILLOR JASON SALTER

It was with much sadness that the Chairman informed the Committee of the death of Parish Councillor Jason Salter.

Councillor Salter had been a member of the Abbess, Beauchamp and Berners Roding Parish Council and one of the Town/Parish Council representatives on the Standards Committee. He was also the Vice Chairman of this Committee.

Members stood for a minute's silence in tribute to the memory of Parish Councillor Jason Salter.

31. TO APPOINT A TEMPORARY VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs Sheila Jackman be temporarily appointed as Vice Chairman of the Local Councils' Liaison Committee.

32. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 10 November 2010 be agreed.

33. NATIONAL CENSUS PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation from David Vernazza, the officer in charge of organising the Census for the region, on the background aims and objectives of the upcoming national Census.

The Committee noted that the census had started in 1801 and was of great historical value as an indicator of the past. Central Government raised about £100 billion in tax and the information gathered by the census taxation would be used for redistributing funds to local communities. The Committee noted that there was a need to understand how society was changing, and the underlying long-term trends or patterns.

The Committee noted that:

- it was estimated that each form filled in would generate about £500 a year in funding for the District;
- completion of the forms also underpinned policy making and forward planning and helped to target expenditure; and
- historically, the over eighties and students were difficult to include and count as they have experienced difficulty in filling in the forms, or were unsure of where they stated their residency.

The Committee noted that Town and Parish Councils could support and help with the Census in their area, by promoting information and providing help for those with difficulty in completing the forms.

The forms would be posted from the start of the second week of March and they could be filled out online or manually. Census day was 27 March 2011 and a series of adverts and corresponding publicity would lead up to this day.

The meeting was then opened for questions from members.

Councillor Mrs. Smith asked what the penalty was for not returning the form. Mr Vernazza said that the maximum fine was £1,000, with the timescale dependant on the law courts. The compliance teams would start work in June by sending out warnings, but possible prosecutions would not go to court until the end of the year. Last time there were approximately one hundred prosecutions.

Councillor Mrs. Whitehouse enquired about publicity, and was informed that television adverts and billboards had been launched nationally in order to improve awareness. Mr. Vernazza also offered posters for Town and Parish Councils to use in their newsletters.

In response to questions from Councillor Pond and Councillor Mrs. Smith, Mr. Vernazza informed members that the distribution of Census forms was informed by data sources other than the Electoral Register. In this way more residents could be targeted, and second home owners would be less likely to receive multiple forms.

Councillor Mrs. Whitehouse asked for clarification on recording visitors to a residence on 27 March. Mr. Vernazza explained that visitors on that day should be noted in the appropriate sections, and then fill out their own census forms. The two could then be cross-referenced.

The representative from Nazeing Parish Council enquired about British and English nationality options, to which she was informed that the form allowed for one, neither, or both options to be ticked, depending on how the individual saw themself.

The Chairman asked about the relevance of the Census, considering it could be the last of its kind. She was told that though this might be the final one, and an alternative was unclear, the results would remain relevant. Headline figures would be available 12-15 months from collection, with more detailed analysis following approximately 12 months after that. The information would then be freely available to anyone for no charge.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Vernazza for his presentation and for answering members' questions.

34. CORPORATE PLAN 2011-2015

Members were asked to consider the District Council's Corporate Plan, which had been circulated with the agenda. This was the Council's strategic planning document setting out service delivery priorities over a four-year period, which intended to translate the long-term vision for the District into specific objectives for the Council.

The Corporate Plan evidenced the Council's awareness of local issues, and that improved outcomes for local people were being delivered. It was closely linked to the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy, outlining the financial resources available to fulfil specific priorities and objectives, and set out how the authority would deliver its vision and priorities. As an important element of the Council's Performance Management Framework, the Corporate Plan informed the annual Business Plans to illustrate the work that directorates and services perform which contributed towards the achievement of the Council's priorities and objectives.

Acting Chief Executive, Derek Macnab, informed the Committee that this document had been agreed in principle by the Council, though comments would be considered until the publication date on 1 April 2011.

Councillor Mrs Jackman from Ongar Town Council asked for more detail as to how local residents' views were to be included in the future. Mr. Macnab advised about a consultation exercise that would commence in the new municipal year, using a mix of methodologies in order to take account of local residents' views, and promote a greater level of understanding as to the responsibilities held by the three tiers of Council.

Mr. Bob Whittome from Epping Town Council enquired as to how the Core Planning Strategy would take account of the Localism Bill. He was informed that the attached plan had been drafted before the publication of the Localism Bill and would be revised and updated.

Councillor Mrs Jackman queried how the voluntary sector would be affected by recent cuts in services. Mr. Macnab acknowledged the financial pressure on the voluntary sector, but assured members of the relatively strong financial position the District Council held and of the ongoing support to services through the Grant-Aid budget which had been retained at the current level for 2011/12.

Councillor Pond requested some grammatical corrections, and the rewording of two sections.

RESOLVED:

(1) that the District Council's Corporate Plan for the period 2011/12 to 2014/15 be noted, and the following amendments made:

(a) that page 35 be rewritten to reflect the high level of recycling services provided by the District Council;

(ii) that page 37 be reworded to acknowledge the differing interpretations of potential benefit regarding the possible redevelopments at Langston Road in Loughton; and

(2) that a progress report be submitted to this committee approximately six months into the plan timetable.

35. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS

(a) Fly tipping

The Assistant Director (Technical), Kim Durrani advised Members on the current arrangements concerning fly tipping. Instances of this crime had become more frequent, with a 2000% increase from 2008 to 2009. Alternative methods of managing fly tipping had been introduced, such as publicity of legitimate waste carriers, and spot license checks on vehicle. Members were informed that if the illegally dumped rubbish did not contain any evidence quality data, Officers were unable to identify the offenders and therefore unable to prosecute. Any incidents of fly tipping should be reported to the Environment and Neighbourhood team, though they were not currently fully operational.

Members noted that fly tipping was a crime against the landowner. Epping Forest District Council were happy to work with Town and Parish Councils to tackle the problem, and was currently working with other District Councils to prevent cross-boundary tipping of rubbish.

The representative from High Ongar Parish Council asked whether there was any money available to residents to help with clearance of fly tipping. Mr. Durrani replied that unfortunately there was not any funding in place to clear rubbish from private land, though Officers could be called out to sift for any evidence quality data.

Councillor Miller from Epping Upland Parish Council expressed concern at the 2000% increase of fly tipping instances, and raised the option of installing CCTV cameras. Mr. Durrani acknowledged the high figure as a symptom of the current economic climate, and explained that the laws concerning CCTV camera installation made this option unfeasible. These rules included limits on where cameras could be placed, and the compulsory advertisement of their presence.

Councillor Pond suggested an option of liaising with the police in order to check waste carriers at night. Mr. Durrani was unsure about prosecution laws, and advised members that the problem involved boundary crossing. The intention was for perpetrators to be prosecuted rather than inadvertently moving them to another District.

RESOLVED:

That the District map demonstrating neighbourhood demarcations and contact details for the Environmental and Neighbourhood teams responsible for fly tipping be attached to the minutes for this meeting.

(b) Parking Responsibilities

The Assistant Director (Technical), Kim Durrani, reported on the proposals to transfer on-street parking enforcement to the North Essex Partnership. The scheme entailed the creation of two partnerships, North and South, with six districts in each. Epping Forest would be part of the North Essex Partnership, which would have Colchester taking the managing role. At the Cabinet meeting on 7 March 2011, a recommendation was made to Council to join the partnership after a long protracted debate regarding terms and stipulations.

Though Epping Forest District Council was not in deficit, others within Essex were. The County was therefore seeing a loss of approximately £1 million per year under the Council's current arrangements. Members noted that EFDC owned off-street parking charges would remain the same, though on-street charges were subject to change. There was no guarantee that the free short-stay, on-street parking currently available in the District's smaller town centres would continue.

The representative from Epping Town Council asked what plans were being implemented in order to reduce the shortfall across the County. Mr. Durrani informed the committee that the Partnership would look at a variety of methods, including combining IT systems, rationalising staffing, and the possibility to increase tariffs (£10 increase over 4 years for residents parking permits). Acting Chief Executive Derek Macnab added that the Business Plan had included an expectation of rigorous enforcement of signs and lines in order to recover some of the loss. The responsibility for Traffic Regulation Orders would transfer to the Partnerships in due course.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse enquired if the Partnership would set fees, or if the responsibility would remain with Councils, and was informed that the aim ultimately was for lines and signs to be managed by the Partnership. Mr. Durrani added that the arrangements regarding governance had yet to be formalised, but there must be a consensus between partners.

Councillor Pond and the representative from Epping Town Council asked about the effect on small business and localism. Mr. Durrani acknowledged the importance of local views, and that parking partnerships would need to acknowledge local views on changes to tariffs and permits. The Local Highways Panel and Local Councils' Liaison Committee could serve as forums for comment in the future.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Smith, Mr. Durrani informed the Committee that arrangements for reporting back from the Partnership had not been finalised.

(c) IPlan System

The Business Manager (Planning and Economic Development), Peter Millward reported on the progress in setting up a joint working party in accord with the resolution of the Local Councils' Liaison Committee on 10 November 2010 (minute 27 refers). This would liaise directly with the Planning and Economic Development directorate to discuss any problems with the usage of IPlan.

Members expressed their concern that no user group had been created so far. Mr. Millward apologised for the delay, and outlined that the user group would consist of representatives from a wider working party. At a suggestion from Councillor Mrs Smith, it was agreed that training sessions for the IPlan system would be held in the computer suite in order for problems to be demonstrated first-hand.

Acting Chief Executive Derek Macnab added that the Council Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was researching broadband speed and access, and seeking improvements to both throughout the District.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that a joint working IPlan User Group be established by the Business Manager for Planning & Economic Development; and
- (2) that future training sessions on the IPlan system be held in the ICT Training Suite in the Civic Offices.

36. CHANGE OF MEETING DAY FOR THIS MEETING

Members noted that the meeting day for this Committee was changing from Wednesdays to Thursdays in the new municipal year.

37. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Conservation Areas

In relation to an item discussed at the Local Councils' Liaison Committee meeting on 17 March 2010 (minute 20a refers), Councillor Pond asked how volunteer work on appraisals of conservation areas would be progressed now the Conservation Officer had retired. Acting Chief Executive Derek Macnab acknowledged the high standard of volunteer work, and advised members that an assistant in conservation was being trained to take over responsibilities from the retired post.

RESOLVED:

That a target date concerning progression of conservation areas be circulated to members.

(b) West Essex Area Forum

Councillor Mrs Jackman from Ongar Town Council informed the Committee that no further meetings would take place of the West Essex Area Forum. Members expressed their disappointment about the dissolution of the forum, that no consultation was undertaken, and that no notice had been given to Town and Parish Councils. Councillor McEwen commented that previous meetings were not generally well-attended, and more support was needed to keep these forums running.

RESOLVED:

That representations on behalf of this Committee be sent to Essex County Council, expressing members' views.

(c) Police Commissioner Elections

Councillor Mrs. Smith requested a presentation be arranged concerning the elections for Police Commissioners, due to take place in May 2012.

RESOLVED:

That a presentation be given on the proposed election of Police Commissioners in 2012 at the Local Councils' Liaison Committee meeting scheduled for 22 March 2012.

38. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

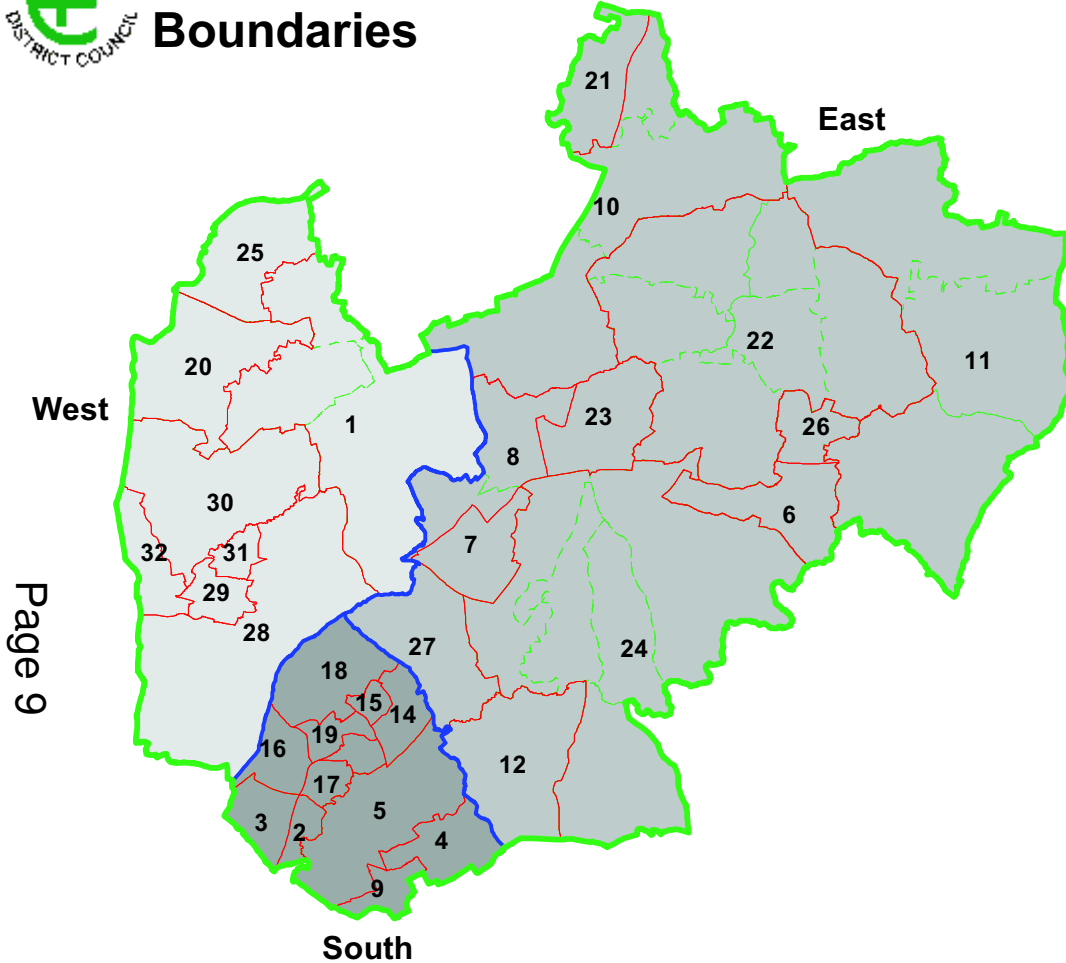
Members noted the Local Councils' Liaison Committee dates for the new municipal year.

CHAIRMAN

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District and Parish Boundaries



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Key to Wards

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Broadley Common, Epping Upland and Nazeing | 12 Lambourne | 23 North Weald Bassett |
| 2 Buckhurst Hill East | 13 Loughton Alderton | 24 Passingford |
| 3 Buckhurst Hill West | 14 Loughton Broadway | 25 Roydon |
| 4 Chigwell Row | 15 Loughton Fairmead | 26 Shelley |
| 5 Chigwell Village | 16 Loughton Forest | 27 Theydon Bois |
| 6 Chipping Ongar, Greensted and Marden Ash | 17 Loughton Roding | 28 Waltham Abbey High Beach |
| 7 Epping Hemnall | 18 Loughton St John's | 29 Waltham Abbey Honey Lane |
| 8 Epping Lyndsey and Thornwood Common | 19 Loughton St Mary's | 30 Waltham Abbey North East |
| 9 Grange Hill | 20 Lower Nazeing | 31 Waltham Abbey Paternoster |
| 10 Hastingwood, Matching and Sheering Village | 21 Lower Sheering | 32 Waltham Abbey South West |
| 11 High Ongar, Willingale and the Rodings | 22 Moreton and Fyfield | |

Environment & Neighbourhoods

West

Steve Anstiss - 01992 564394
sanstiss@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
 John Heppell - 01992 564129
jheppell@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

South

Michael Richardson - 01992 564422
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 Chris Smith - 01992 564160
csmith@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

East

Richard Thomason - 01992 564391
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 Duncan Forsyth - 01992 564497
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Environment & Neighbourhoods Manager
 Richard Gardiner - 01992 564089
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KEY

- Ward Boundary —
- Parish Boundary - - -
- Neighbourhood Area Boundary —

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Minute Item 35

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