

# EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

**Committee:** Council **Date:** 17 February 2015

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 9.41 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors A Boyce (Chairman), Mrs E Webster (Vice-Chairman), K Adams, Mrs H Brady, W Breare-Hall, R Butler, G Chambers, D Dorrell, Mrs R Gadsby, L Girling, P Gode, Mrs A Grigg, R Jennings, Ms H Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Knapman, Mrs J Lea, A Lion, Mrs M McEwen, L Mead, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, S Neville, J Philip, Mrs C P Pond, C C Pond, C Roberts, B Sandler, Mrs M Sartin, Ms G Shiell, D Stallan, Ms S Stavrou, B Surtees, Mrs T Thomas, Mrs L Wagland, G Waller, Ms S Watson, S Weston, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

**Apologies:** Councillors K Angold-Stephens, R Bassett, K Chana, R Glozier, J Hart, Mrs S Jones, Ms Y Knight, H Mann, A Mitchell MBE, B Rolfe and A Watts

**Officers Present:** G Chipp (Chief Executive), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), C O'Boyle (Director of Governance), R Palmer (Director of Resources), S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), P Seager (Chairman's Secretary) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Assistant)

## 80. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant Director of Governance and Performance Management reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

## 81. MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 December 2014 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 82. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

### (a) Dispensations

The Council noted that the Monitoring Officer had granted dispensations to the following "dual hatted" District Councillors (who were also Parish or Town Councillors) to enable them to take part and vote on agenda item 14 (Report of the Cabinet – Council Budget 2015/16) and in particular the Local Support Grant to Parish and Town Councils: H Brady, W Breare-Hall, R Gadsby, L Girling, P Gode, A Grigg, H Kane, J Knapman, J Lea, A Lion, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, J Phillip, C Pond, B Sandler, G Shiell, D Stallan, S Stavrou, B Surtees, T Thomas, L Wagland, S Watson, S Weston, E Webster, J M Whitehouse, D Wixley.

**83. ANNOUNCEMENTS****(a) Announcements by the Chairman of the Council****(i) Events**

The Chairman reported on some of the events he had attended since the last meeting of the Council. The Council noted that the Chairman had been to many events around the District including a visit to Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) Annual Christmas Lunch in Theydon Bois, the Children's Christmas Party at Norway House, to observe at the CAB Offices in Loughton, the Chairman's Civic Carol Service and the Annual Menorah Lighting in Chigwell. The Chairman wished everyone a happy New Year and advised that he had received a letter of thanks from Crisis at Christmas Charity for the donated T-Shirts he delivered before Christmas.

**(ii) Floral Display**

The Chairman advised that he intended the flowers from tonight's meeting to be sent to St Clare's Hospice, Hastingwood.

**(b) Announcements by the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holders**

There were no announcements under this heading.

**(c) Safeguarding Training**

The Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Transport, Councillor Waller asked all members to ensure that they had completed the Safeguarding training and that he would be writing to the members that had not attended to encourage them.

**84. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

The Council noted that there were no public questions to be considered at this meeting.

**85. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE****(a) Parking Permits in Epping**

**By Councillor J H Whitehouse to Councillor G Waller, Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener, Transport**

'How many residents' and business parking bays exist in each zone in Epping and how many residents' and business parking permits have been issued for each zone?'

**Response by Councillor G Waller, Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener, Transport**

In Epping, the number of parking bays for each zone is as follows:

Zone A	65
Zone B	2
Zone C	26
Zone E	0

I should explain not only that the length of each bay varies, so that some may accommodate one car whereas others can take several, but also that, as they are not

divided into actual parking spaces, the number of vehicles that can be parked in each one may vary, depending for instance on the length of each car.

At present I am unable to give separate figures for residents' and business parking bays.

A total of 272 parking permits have been issued in the 4 parking zones, and their breakdown is as follows:

Zone A	146
Zone B	9
Zone C	97
Zone E	20

Of these, the total number of business permits issued for Epping is 33, but as many as a third of these may currently be inactive for one reason or another. I should add that where no bays are provided, there is likely to be provision for vehicles to be parked at the kerb.

#### **Additional question by Councillor J H Whitehouse**

'Is there a ratio for permits to parking spaces, at which point no further permits are issued because a resident who has a permit, had received a penalty notice twice owing to a lack of parking spaces available?'

#### **Response by Councillor Waller**

Councillor Waller advised that he was not aware of such a ratio and that he was sorry to hear about the residents parking problems. He would look into the circumstances and if there were particular problems in a zone, it would be addressed.

## **86. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

The Council received written reports from members of the Cabinet.

The Chairman invited the Leader to provide an oral report and other members of the Cabinet to give an oral update.

#### **(a) The Leader of the Council**

The Leader advised the Council that he had attended a number of meetings in relation to the duty to cooperate including the Sustainable Development Board which was mentioned in the Planning Policy Portfolio Holder's report. He also highlighted an emerging issue from the Essex Leaders meetings that the Council would need to debate in the months ahead, which was the consideration of the feasibility paper for an Essex devolution proposal. He advised that this would not be a move towards a Unitary Essex but a bid to Central Government to devolve powers and resources to a new combined authority in Essex. This could provide a greater control and focus to commonly agreed priorities across the County that currently the District Council may not be involved in. Considerations about what arrangements would be required to support this from both Essex and Central Government were required and he would advise members when he had further information.

#### **(b) Environment**

Councillor Breare-Hall advised that he had several updates to his report which included winning the 'Love Essex' anti-litter campaign, Keep Britain Tidy Diamond Jubilee Award,

the removal of the option to apply for Rate Relief under the extended arrangements for flood damage experienced between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, with any applications now being dealt with through the Repair and Renew grant and further details to be made available in the Council Bulletin. Finally the unauthorised encampment on the Epping Forest College land had moved onto Highways Agency land near the M11, where they had been visited by Environmental Health Officers to prevent flying tipping.

(c) Governance and Development Management

Councillor Philip advised the Council that the funding for 'Maximising Registration' which provided 'House Notification Letters' for the Individual Elector Registration (IER) had added over 2,200 names to the register, removed over 1,700 and amended 662. Councillor Philip would also be raising the rainbow Flag outside the Civic Offices for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender History month on Wednesday 18 February 2015.

**87. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**

(a) Litter at Oldshire Lane, Waltham Abbey

Councillor Butler congratulated the Environment Portfolio Holder on the new waste contract and advised the Portfolio Holder about Oldshire Lane, Waltham Abbey, where a litter problem had occurred owing to drivers using this area to park and deposit rubbish on to the kerbside.

Councillor Breare-Hall advised that he was not aware of the problem at Oldshire Lane and he would investigate the problem.

(b) Countrycare

Councillor Wixley wanted to congratulate and thank Countrycare and the Volunteers for the work they provide around the District, in particular the hedgerows and trees that were planted in Loughton recently and would like a note of appreciation recorded.

Councillor Waller agreed that Countrycare provide a welcomed service and noted Councillor Wixley's sentiments.

(c) Electoral Registration Figures

Councillor Neville asked the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Performance Management whether he could advise on a comparison between how many people were registered this year compared to last year and whether he thought the same figures could be achieved this year or the figure would fall short?

Councillor Philip advised that he would get back to Councillor Neville with the exact figures on the register and an extensive data matching exercise had taken place with the last years register and other data sources which provided a 96% result. A further 5,000 changes had recently taken place, so the figures should hopefully be similar to the previous year. Councillor Philip did advise there had been a push to register 16/17 year olds at schools and at the college and hoped to have a similar level of people registered.

(d) Benefits Processing

Councillor J H Whitehouse asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance whether the time for benefits to be processed could be reduced from 21 days because of the majority of food bank users were people on benefits.

Councillor Stavrou advised that she believed that all the targets for benefits to be processed were being met and if Councillor J H Whitehouse felt that these could be improved, she would investigate.

(e) Accident & Emergency

Councillor Murray asked the Leader whether he shared his concerns of the latest waiting times for Accident and Emergency services at the Princess Alexander in Harlow, with 77.6% of patients being seen within four hours compared to a Government target of 95% and a national average of 90.5% and whether he had been in contact with the hospital authorities and whether he could exercise what influence he has to try and improve the situation?

Councillor Whitbread advised that he shared Councillor Murray's concerns and would discuss this further with him. He suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could look at this issue as well.

(f) Stepping up Roadshow

Councillor Gadsby asked the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Community Wellbeing whether she had received any successful feedback on the Stepping Up roadshow provided by Essex County Council and whether any volunteering had been followed up?

Councillor Kane advised that she had not received any feedback on the event but would follow it up and advise Councillor Gadsby.

(g) Wheelie Bins

Councillor J M Whitehouse asked the Portfolio Holder for Environment what the requirements were between residents and Biffa with regards to place of return of wheelie bins by Biffa?

Councillor Breare-Hall advised that Biffa were required to return the wheelie bin to the boundary of the property where residents are requested to leave them for collection. Councillor Breare-Hall was aware of some cases where this was not happening and would be happy to take the details from Councillor J M Whitehouse and raise the issue with Biffa.

(h) Cornmill Car Park, Waltham Abbey

Councillor Lea asked the Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Transport whether a pedestrian path could be provided for at the edge of the Cornmill car park, Waltham Abbey to allow wheelchair or pushchair access to the bridge?

Councillor Waller advised that he was aware of the problem and that the carpark was to be resurfaced so that the lines could accommodate the path.

(i) Appreciation for Information Provided

Councillor Surtees thanked the Portfolio Holder for Finance for her reply to a previous question at Council regarding Child Services.

(j) Housing

Councillor Shiell thanked the Portfolio Holder for Housing for the consideration of allocated parking for the Roundhills House building programme and asked whether other Council House Building schemes would have allocated parking?

Councillor Stallan advised that Councillor Shiell and Councillor Watts had raised their concerns at the Plans West committee that considered the Council Housebuilding scheme at Roundhills, which resulted in the sites being included in the off street parking programme. He confirmed that the areas which include the Council Housebuilding schemes would work together with the off street parking programmes.

#### **88. MOTIONS**

The Chairman reported that there were no motions to be considered at this meeting.

#### **89. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2015/16**

Councillor A Lion presented a report on the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 which was required by Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to be published each financial year. Specifically including the Council's approach to its highest and lowest paid employees.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes be adopted.

#### **90. JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Councillor A Lion presented a report on the revised terms of reference of the Joint Consultative Committee.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the revised terms of reference of the Joint Consultative Committee attached as Appendix 2 to these minutes be adopted.

#### **91. SUPPORT FOR THE COUNCIL'S PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

The Council noted that the Chairman of the Council had agreed that the following decision of the Cabinet should be treated as a matter of urgency and not be subject to call-in;

(a) to retain the expertise and knowledge of the Assistant Director (Asset Management and Economic Development) on a part-time contract basis for a period of 13 months, to ensure that the development of Langston Road and other sites critical to the Council's future revenue streams proceed without delay;

(b) approve the use of Contract Standing Order C10 (Negotiated Tendering) to procure the contract;

(c) delegate the authority to negotiate and finalise contract terms to the Chief Executive and the Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder;

(d) that the cost was funded in 2014/15 from existing DDF development budgets;

- (e) that a DDF bid was made for £90,000 to cover the cost in 2015/16;
- (f) that given the high monthly cost of delaying key projects, the contract was executed expeditiously; and
- (g) the Director of Neighbourhoods procures replacement resource with an appropriate handover programme 6 months before the end of the contract period.

**92. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT & INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2015/16 TO 2017/18**

**Mover: Councillor Stavrou, Finance Portfolio Holder**

Councillor Stavrou presented a report on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18 and prudential indicators.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That the following documents attached to these minutes as Appendix 3 be adopted:

- (a) Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18;
- (b) Minimum Revenue Provision Statement;
- (c) Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for 2015/16 to 2017/18;
- (d) the rate of interest to be applied to any Inter-Fund Balances; and
- (e) Treasury Management Policy Statement.

**93. COUNCIL BUDGETS 2015/16**

Councillor Stavrou presented a report on an additional DDF budget to be added to the Council Budget for Town and Parish Councils affected by major preceptors that had not been updated on the final taxbase figure.

There voted for the recommendation: (44) namely: Councillors Boyce, Webster, Adams, Brady, Breare-Hall, Butler, Chambers, Dorrell, Gadsby, Girling, Gode, Grigg, Jennings, Kane, Kauffman, Keska, Knapman, Lea, Lion, McEwen, Mead, Mohindra, Morgan, Murray, Neville, Philip, C C Pond, C P Pond, Roberts, Sandler, Sartin, Shiell, Stallan, Stavrou, Surtees, Thomas, Wagland, Waller, Watson, Weston, Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and Wixley.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That a DDF budget of £5,543 be added to the budgets considered by Cabinet on 2 February.

**Carried**

Councillor Stavrou presented a report on budget and Council Tax Declaration 2015/16.

**Amendment moved by J M Whitehouse and Seconded by B Surtees.**

There voted for the recommendation: (7) namely: Adams, Gode, Murray, Neville, Surtees, J H Whitehouse and J M Whitehouse.

There voted against the recommendation: (37) namely: Councillors Boyce, Webster, Brady, Breare-Hall, Butler, Chambers, Dorrell, Gadsby, Girling, Grigg, Jennings, Kane, Kauffman, Keska, Knapman, Lea, Lion, McEwen, Mead, Mohindra, Morgan, Philip, C C Pond, C P Pond, Roberts, Sandler, Sartin, Shiell, Stallan, Stavrou, Thomas, Wagland, Waller, Watson, Weston, Whitbread and Wixley.

(1) That the Neighbourhoods Off Street Parking - Parking Fee Increases (£95,000) in 2015/16 be replaced with (£82,000) through not implementing weekend parking charges and therefore amending the total CSB savings in 2015/16 from (£573,000) to (£560,000) set out in Annex 1 be added to recommendation 1;

(2) That the Chief Executive Transformation Programme of £75,000 in 2015/16 be deleted from Annex 2 and Communities Grants to Voluntary Organisations Maintenance of £17,000 be included in Annex 2 for 2015/16 and 2016/17 decreasing the DDF in 2015/16 to £1,071,000 and increasing it to £548,000 in 2016/17 be added to recommendation 2; and

(3) That consequential amendments be made to annex 3, 4 and 8 to include DDF balances reducing by £1,071,000 and contribution from balances in 2015/16 increasing to £55,000.

**Lost**

There voted for the recommendation: (43) namely: Councillors Boyce, Webster, Adams, Brady, Breare-Hall, Butler, Chambers, Dorrell, Gadsby, Girling, Gode, Grigg, Jennings, Kane, Kauffman, Keska, Knapman, Lea, Lion, McEwen, Mead, Mohindra, Morgan, Neville, Philip, C C Pond, C P Pond, Roberts, Sandler, Sartin, Shiell, Stallan, Stavrou, Surtees, Thomas, Wagland, Waller, Watson, Weston, Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and Wixley.

There voted against the recommendation: (1) Murray.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the list of CSB growth and savings for the 2015/16 budget (set out in Annex 1 to these minutes) be approved;

(2) That the list of District Development Fund items for the 2015/16 budget (set out in Annex 2 to these minutes) be approved;

(3) That the revenue estimates for 2015/16 and the draft Capital Programme for 2015/16 be approved as set out in Annexes 3, 4 (a-g) and 5 to these minutes including all contributions to and from reserves as set out in the attached Annexes;

(4) That the Medium Term Financial Forecast be approved as set out in Annexes 8 a and 8 b to these minutes;



(5) That the 2015/16 HRA budget be approved and that the application of rent increases and decreases resulting in an average increase of 2.2% from £95.44 to £97.54, be approved;

(6) That £0.5 million be moved from the General Fund Reserve to create a new Earmarked Reserve that will be used for Invest to Save projects be approved;

(7) That the Council's policy of retaining revenue balances at no lower than £4.0M or 25% of the net budget requirement whichever is the higher for the four year period to 2017/18 be amended to no lower than £4.0M or 25% of the net budget requirement whichever is the higher during the four year period up to and including 2018/19;

(8) That the report of the Chief Financial Officer on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2015/16 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves (Annex 9 attached to these minutes) be noted.

#### Declaration of Council Tax

(9) That it be noted that under delegated authority the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder, calculated the Council Tax Base 2015/16:

(a) for the whole Council area as 51,196.3 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended); and

(b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as set out below and in Annex 6 attached to these minutes:

	Tax Base
Abbess, Beauchamp & Berners	207.7
Roding	
Buckhurst Hill	5,028.5
Chigwell	5,874.3
Epping Town	4,885.6
Epping Upland	401.1
Fyfield	407.9
High Ongar	541.0
Lambourne	829.7
Loughton Town	11,927.6
Matching	421.1
Moreton, Bobbingworth and The Lavers	546.8
Nazeing	1,990.5
North Weald Bassett	2,441.3
Ongar	2,618.9
Roydon	1,265.9
Sheering	1,290.0
Stanford Rivers	348.0
Stapleford Abbotts	509.5
Stapleford Tawney	79.3
Theydon Bois	1,953.6
Theydon Garnon	76.4
Theydon Mount	111.7
Waltham Abbey Town	7,212.8

Willingale

227.1

(10) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015/16 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

(a) £123,646,699 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils;

(b) £112,870,550 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;

(c) £10,776,149 being the amount by which the aggregate at 10 (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 10 (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act);

(d) £210.49 being the amount at 10 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (the amount at 9 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);

(e) £3,159,675 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Annex 6);

(f) £148.77 being the amount at 10 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 10 (e) above by Item T (9 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates;

(11) That it be noted that the County Council, the Police Authority and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the category of dwellings in the Council's area as shown in Annex 7 attached to these minutes;

(12) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts in Annex 7 Part B (tabled) as the amounts of Council Tax for 2015/16 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings; and

(13) That in accordance with section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, Council determines that the amount of Council Tax shown at (10) (f) of £148.77 for 2015/16, being unchanged from 2014/15 is not excessive and therefore there is no need to hold a local referendum.

#### 94. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

(a) Report of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Council received a written report from Councillor Morgan, the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**95. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER**

In the absence of the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, the Director of Governance presented a report on the procedure and appointment of a new Co-opted Member to the Audit and Governance Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That a Panel of three Councillors including the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee be appointed with delegated authority to undertake interviews following public advertisement and to appoint the preferred candidate for the vacant co-opted member position on the Audit and Governance Committee be approved;
- (2) That Councillors K Adams and B Jennings be appointed to serve on the Panel with the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee;
- (3) That Mr. R. Thompson and Mr A Javis (co-opted members) be invited to attend the interviews in an advisory, non-voting capacity; and
- (4) That appreciation of the contribution of Mr. R. Thompson as a co-opted Member of the Audit and Governance Committee over a six-year period be formally recorded.

**96. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

The Council received a written the report regarding the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority from Councillors M Sartin and S Stavrou the Council's representatives.

**CHAIRMAN**