

## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES**

**Committee:** Council **Date:** 24 April 2018

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 8.00 - 9.45 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors D Stallan (Chairman), R Bassett (Vice-Chairman), R Baldwin, A Beales, N Bedford, W Breare-Hall, R Brookes, R Butler, G Chambers, K Chana, D Dorrell, R Gadsby, A Grigg, Hadley, S Heap, L Hughes, R Jennings, J Jennings, S Jones, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, A Lion, L Mead, A Mitchell, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, S Neville, A Patel, J Philip, C P Pond, C C Pond, C Roberts, D Roberts, B Rolfe, P Stalker, S Stavrou, D Sunger, E Webster, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

**Apologies:** Councillors N Avey, H Brady, J Knapman, Y Knight, M McEwen, B Sandler and M Sartin

**Officers Present:** D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), A Hall (Director of Communities), S Hill (Assistant Director (Governance)), P Maddock (Assistant Director (Accountancy)), P Maginnis (Assistant Director (Human Resources)), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Officer)

### **114. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Assistant Director of Governance 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.

### **115. FORMER COUNCILLOR R. BRAYBROOK, S.D. RILEY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBER P. ADAMS**

It was with much sadness that the Chairman informed the Council of the death of former Councillors Ron Braybrook, Peter Riley and the Independent Member Peter Adams.

Former Councillor Ron Braybrook was the Chairman of the Council for the 1989/90 municipal year and represented the Buckhurst Hill East Ward from 1981-84 and Buckhurst Hill West Ward from 1985-1994 as a Conservative Councillor. He had served on many of the Council's member's bodies and outside organisations during this period.

Former Councillor Peter Riley represented the Paternoster Ward from 1979-1998 as a Labour Councillor and had been the Leader of the Minority Group in 1979. He served on many of the Council's member's bodies and outside organisation during this time and had been an active member of the Waltham Abbey community.

Peter Adams had served as an Independent Person on the Standards Committee since 2012 and was one of the Epping Forest Verderers.

Members paid tribute to the memory of former Councillors Ron Braybrook, Peter Riley and the Independent Member Peter Adams and stood for a minute's silence in their memory.

#### **116. MINUTES**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Council meeting on 22 February 2018 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **117. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Staff Code of Conduct, D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive) and A Hall (Director of Communities) declared a personal interest in agenda item 18 (Implementation of People Strategy). They advised that they had determined that their interest was pecuniary and that they would leave the meeting for the consideration and voting on the matter.

#### **118. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(a) Announcements by the Chairman of Council

(i) Chairman's Events

The Chairman reported that he had hosted his Epping Forest Civic Awards with help from the Youth Councillors and that they had won the National Crime Beat Awards for their MiLife Project.

He had also attended the annual St George's day Scout event at Winsor Castle in the presence Princess Beatrice of York, received a certificate from the Rudolf Walker Foundation in recognition of the work that had taken place in the District and attended the rededication of the Epping War Memorial.

(ii) Floral Display

The Chairman announced that he intended to send the flowers from tonight's meeting to Doris Holden for her contributions to the British Legion.

(iii) Presentation to Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF)

The Chairman presented the VAEF with the Essex County Council Bowl and the High Sheriffs' grant, which had given credit to organisations or teams of people that, had made the extra effort beyond their statutory or formal duty to deliver programmes directly to the community. Furthermore, the High Sheriffs' grant would support the installation of enhanced key safes and other safety equipment in the homes of vulnerable people.

#### **119. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

The Council noted that there were no public questions submitted for consideration at the meeting.

**120. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE****Question by Councillor R Butler to the Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener, Transport, Councillor S Kane**

There have been many residents complaining about the dangers of articulated trucks and lorries that seem to overflow from the Junction 26 lorry park and cause real problems in the adjacent roads that are supposed to be restricted and are not built for this kind of heavy duty traffic with lorries parking, turning and destroying some of the bollards, road surface and the road sign in the areas of Old Shire Lane, Honey Lane, Farthingdale Lane and Stoney Bridge Drive?

I have had communications from the Police Traffic Management Section, who have explained that parking in these areas is definitely a NEPP /Council issue and not a Police issue. This is an ongoing problem which is getting worse and traffic restrictions in Old Shire Lane need to be enforced or limited access restrictions put in place with the bollards and street sign replaced.

Could the Safer, Cleaner and Transport Portfolio Holder advise what action he will take in partnership with NEPP and ECC regarding these problems?

**Reply from the Safer, Cleaner and Transport Portfolio Holder, Councillor S Kane**

"I thank Cllr Butler for his question and highlighting the particular issue to my attention.

I am pleased to report that the damaged street sign has been replaced by the District Council as this is something within our remit. The damaged bollard has been reported to Essex County Council for replacement.

I have sought advice on the other significant matter of damage caused by articulated lorries. I am informed that this is not a parking restrictions issue, the lorries do not park on these local roads but try and turn around. This makes it a moving traffic offence which can only be dealt with by the Highways Authority. I am also informed that a solution could be a traffic regulation to control the movement of these large vehicles or some type of physical feature. In order to assess the issues and consider any possible solutions I have made a scheme request to the Local Highways Panel. This will enable highways engineers to investigate and advise on the next steps. I shall advise Cllr Butler as soon as I hear from highway officers."

**Supplementary Question from Councillor R Butler to Safer, Cleaner and Transport Portfolio Holder, Councillor S Kane**

"Could he also consider the environmental issues of the vehicles parking with their engines running outside residential housing and whether it could be prevented"

**Reply from the Safer, Cleaner and Transport Portfolio Holder, Councillor S Kane**

"Vehicle idling was actually an offence and so that was something the Council could investigate. With regards to the parking, if restrictions were put in place this problem would become mute. Therefore the information would be passed onto the Highways Panel for consideration and assessment at the next meeting in July 2018."

**121. COUNCILLOR A BOYCE, COUNCILLOR L GIRLING, COUNCILLOR G SHIELL & COUNCILLOR S WATSON**

The Council noted that Councillors A Boyce, L Girling, G Shiell and S Watson had resigned. The elections to fill the position would be held on 3 May 2018 although the Moreton and Fyfield Ward position had been filled unopposed.

**122. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR IAN HADLEY**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Ian Hadley, who had been elected unopposed on 6 April 2018 and would represent the Moreton and Fyfield Ward until May 2020.

**123. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

The Council received written reports from all the Portfolio Holders. The Chairman invited the Leader to provide an oral report and any other members of the Cabinet to give an update of their written report, if required.

**(a) The Leader of Council**

The Leader advised that he had represented the Council at a number of external meetings and events. He had attended the Essex Assembly in Chelmsford which brought together all the major stakeholders across the County in the public, private and voluntary sectors; the launch of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 'Live Well'; a meeting with Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) Roger Hirst about the District's Policing requirements; and finally he had met with Leaders from the London, Stansted, Cambridge Strategic Growth Corridor.

Finally he thanked Councillor T Boyce for his active part as Tourism Champion, Councillor W Breare-Hall as the Environment Portfolio Holder, the Chairman of Council, Councillor D Stallan as the former Housing Portfolio Holder for their support on the Cabinet.

**(b) Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder**

Councillor H Kane congratulated the Youth Council for winning the National Crime Beat Award for their MiLife Project. She thanked previous Youth Councillors, current Youth Councillors and Officers for supporting the project and the recognition it had achieved.

**(c) Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder**

Councillor S Kane advised that the Police Crime Commissioner Roger Hirst, had informed him that there would be an increase of 150 additional Police officers in Essex over the next two years. He informed the Council that the Brentwood and Epping Police team for 999 responses would see an increase of 9 officers, the Community Policing team would increase by 4 officers, in addition to the 3 officers that would be funded by the Council and 6 additional Local Policing Team officers that would be based in Loughton.

**124. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE****(a) Local Plan**

Councillor D Dorrell asked the Leader whether members of the Conservative Party had been 'whipped' to vote a certain way before the Council meeting on 14

December 2017 which considered the Publication of the Submission Version of the Epping Forest District Local Plan.

Councillor C Whitbread advised that the Conservative Party had been given a free vote on the Publication of the Submission Version of the Epping Forest District Local Plan and they had not been 'whipped' to vote in a certain way.

(b) Food Banks

Councillor S Murray asked the Leader whether he was aware that the number of 3 day food parcels provided by the local food banks had increased from 640 in 2016/17 to 1197 in 2017/18; and if he had any comments, feedback or actions regarding the local foodbanks manager comments that 'no-one should have to require this help'.

Councillor C Whitbread advised that foodbanks were important and awareness of the poverty in the District was not always recognised with residents not always being aware of this facility. He advised that the Council was proactive in directing people to the relevant areas of the Council or voluntary sectors for help.

(c) Update on the St John's Road, Epping Site

Councillor B Rolfe asked the Assets and Economic Development Portfolio Holder for an update on the St John's Road, Epping Development.

Councillor A Grigg advised that the Frontier Estate development partner had put forward proposals for a food store, large car park, cinema, restaurant and coffee area and 35 homes. She advised that the contracts were on the verge of being signed and were awaiting the Town Council's approval.

(d) Consultation of the Local Plan

Councillor N Bedford asked the Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder whether the Local Plan was back out to consultation.

Councillor J Philip advised that the consultation had not re-opened. Following the publication of Appendix 'B' the Council took the decision to offer the opportunity to any consultee that had made reference to the absence of Appendix 'B' in their response to add to their comments.

(e) Car Idling

Councillor S Neville asked the Environment Portfolio Holder what action was being taken about car idling outside Buckhurst Hill Community Primary School and if nothing would he send down relevant officer to investigate.

Councillor W Breare-Hall advised that the Council took tackling air pollution seriously. He informed the Council that he had taken a Portfolio Holder Decision to allow officers to issue fixed penalty notices, where the occupant refused to turn off their engine. He advised that a report should be available within 4-6 weeks of any action taken and the new Portfolio Holder would be able report back to him.

(f) Position of EFDC in the Recycling League

Councillor G Chambers asked the Environment Portfolio Holder what position EFDC was in the National Recycling League.

Councillor W Breare-Hall advised that EFDC was 22<sup>nd</sup> in Country on the Recycling League table out of 350 Council for the percentage of household waste recycled, composted or re-used. He informed the Council that 57.7% of household waste had been recycled last year.

(g) Additional Police Officers

Councillor S Jones asked the Safer, Cleaner and Transport Portfolio Holder when would the 3 additional Police officers paid for by the Council, be operational and deployed in the District.

Councillor S Kane advised that they would be operating from the updated Community Safety Centre in the Civic Offices from 19 June 2018 and the Sergeant would be prior to this date. This was part of a pilot scheme included within the Accommodation Review.

(h) Epping Sports Centre

Councillor H Whitbread asked the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder whether she could give an update on the future of Epping Leisure Centre.

Councillor H Kane advised that the Council, in partnership with Places for People had just completed a £1.1 million refurbishment to Epping Leisure Centre. The Council had identified the site as suitable for residential development in the Local Plan, which was part of the Council's job to consider what was best for the future of the town and residents of the District. She advised that Epping Leisure Centre was not closing down.

(i) Epping Leisure Centre

Councillor J H Whitehouse asked the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder whether she could clarify when the decision would be made on the future of Epping Leisure Centre.

Councillor H Kane advised that no decision and the Leisure Centre had just been refurbished. The Council would examine all options and she would like Ward member's help, to work with her to find alternative solutions that were suitable for the growing population of the District and Epping Town.

(j) The Broadway and Epping Forest Shopping Park

Councillor C Roberts asked the Asset and Economic Development Portfolio Holder whether she could give an indication of when all the units at the Epping Shopping Retail Park would be filled including the land mark site on the Broadway. He also asked whether some consideration could be given to current tenants on the Broadway, as to not negatively impact the existing businesses.

Councillor A Grigg advised that there were two empty units under negotiation at the 'Heads of Terms' stage, although she would not name them until they were completely signed up.

She advised that she understood the worries and concerns of the tenants in the Broadway but this had to be weighed up against the retail park and the income that would be generated from this as well, to fund council services. The Council had tried to engage with fashion retailers which had not been successful although other

retailers had come forward and to prevent the units being empty a good financial arrangement had been achieved.

With regards to problems at The Broadway, Councillor A Grigg and Councillor G Mohindra had arranged to meet with tenants.

The landmark building had experienced legal delays and this had impacted on the layout of services within the ground floor. She advised that there would be a restaurant, coffee shop, pub and small convenience store.

(k) Ongar and Loughton Swimming Water Quality

Councillor P Keska asked the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder about the current situation of the water quality at Ongar and Loughton Swimming pools.

Councillor H Kane advised that she was aware of the issue and it was being investigated by Places for People and the Council's Environmental Health Team. Currently, at Ongar Leisure Centre there had been a single report of cloudy water which had resulted in the cleaning and dosing rates being reviewed. At Loughton Leisure Centre the issue had been persistent and could be down to a leaking of seals and/or chemical dosing rates which would be reported in the next few days. Furthermore, the water was being tested 4 times a day and was not a health issue.

(l) Council Housebuilding Programme

Councillor D Sunger asked the Housing Portfolio Holder to update members on the success so far of the Council Housebuilding Programme.

Councillor S Stavrou advised that the Council Housebuilding Programme had started in 2014, which had been the first social housing programme for Epping Forest District Council for some 30 years. She advised that the Housebuilding Programme had been broken down into 6 phases supplying a total of 213 dwellings. Phases 1-3 had been completed with 4-6 phases in progress. The sites which had failed to obtain planning permission had been discussed at the Cabinet Housebuilding Committee on 5 April 2018. Following the development agents giving notice, the Council had decided to manage the Housebuilding Programme in-house.

(m) Electoral Review

Councillor R Brookes asked the Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder to expand on the approval to gain an Electoral Review for the District Council.

Councillor J Philip advised that the Council was looking at whether to complete an Electoral Review for the District. He advised that the Council would need to decide whether it be would the right time because factors including the Local Plan, the Transformation Programme and the changing demographics within the District.

(n) Restore – The Broadway

Councillor C C Pond asked the Leader whether he regretted the departure of the Restore organisation in The Broadway because of financial pressure; and if he could allow this the organisation to carry on.

Councillor C Whitbread advised that it was always regrettable any lost of a charity in the district and would happy to discuss this issue with Councillor C C Pond.

(o) Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre

Councillor R Gadsby asked the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder for an update on the new Leisure Centre in Waltham Abbey.

Councillor H Kane advised that the Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre was still on target for completion in November 2018, despite days lost to the bad weather and the handing over process between the old and new leisure centres was starting to be completed.

(p) Epping St John's Site

Councillor J M Whitehouse asked the Asset and Economic Development Portfolio when would she expect a planning application to follow, if the contracts were signed between all partners for the St John's Road site and when would she expect construction to start.

Councillor A Grigg advised that it was hard to forecast although and would probably take around 9 months for the planning application to come forward. She would give a written reply regarding the construction.

(q) Compost Bins

Councillor D Wixley asked the Environment Portfolio Holder whether free compost bins could be offered to residents.

Councillor W Breare-Hall that compost awareness week was coming up between 7 - 11 May 2018 where free compost could be collected from the Bakers Lane carpark in Epping. Although he was not able offer free compost bins the new recycling calendars placed on residents bins were advertising reduced cost recycling bins through the County Council.

(r) Voluntary Action Epping Forest

Councillor S Murray asked the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder why the Council was making VAEF homeless and what steps were Council making to make sure VAEF found another home.

Councillor H Kane advised that the Council had not made VAEF homeless. The lease had expired and the Council had tried to find alternative place for them, helping out by attending meetings and assisting with their moving arrangements. The VAEF were currently situated at Hemnall Street which would be monitored.

## 125. MOTIONS

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

## 126. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Council noted the written report from Councillor M Sartin, presented by the Vice-Chairman Councillor R Brookes.

Councillor S Murray commented on the news that following the Epping Forest College Principal's attendance at the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 February 2018, there had been no mention of the merger with New City College

which had been announced shortly after the meeting on 4 April 2018. Councillor R Brookes noted his comments and advised that negotiations may have been at a sensitive point and that it may have been politically expedient not to mention any particular college at that time.

Councillor G Mohindra advised that he was no longer the Chair of Governors at Epping Forest College and could speak freely. He advised that on 27 February 2018, EF College were in negotiations with multiple colleges, which was being led by the Further Education Commissioners. EF College had been a minority partner in those discussions and the College had not made a decision at that point.

#### **127. APPOINTMENT TO SENIOR MANAGEMENT SELECTION PANEL**

Following the death of former Councillor B Surtees, it had been necessary to appoint a Liberal Democrat representative to the Senior Management Section Panel. Furthermore, with the appointment of J M Whitehouse to the Senior Management Section Panel a vacancy had been created on the Senior Management Appeals Panel which would require a Liberal Democrat appointment.

##### **RESOLVED:**

(1) That Councillor J M Whitehouse be appointed on the Senior Management Section Panel for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year; and

(2) That Councillor J H Whitehouse be appointed on the Senior Management Appeals Panel for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year.

#### **128. CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP**

The Chairman advised that there were no recommendations arising from the Constitution Working Group on 16 April 2018.

#### **129. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

(a) The Council received a written report regarding the Royal Gunpowder Mills from Councillor H Kane, the Council's representative.

(b) There were no requests made for written reports by representatives on joint arrangements and external organisations for the next meeting.

#### **130. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

##### **RESOLVED:**

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below as it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act indicated and the exemption is considered to outweigh the potential public interest in disclosing the information:

<b><u>Agenda Item No</u></b>	<b><u>Subject</u></b>	<b><u>Exempt Information Paragraph Number</u></b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Implementation of People Strategy</b>	<b>1</b>

**131. IMPLEMENTATION OF PEOPLE STRATEGY****Mover: Councillor C Whitbread, Leader of Council**

Councillor C Whitbread presented a report on the Implementation of People Strategy and the Strategic Director Posts.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Council's current Management Board of one Chief Executive and four Service Directors be replaced by a new arrangement comprising of one Chief Executive and two Strategic Directors;
- (2) That the posts of Director of Resources (vacant), Director of Governance (vacant), Director of Neighbourhoods and Director of Communities be deleted from the Council's Establishment;
- (3) That the requirement for voluntary severance on the terms contained within the report be agreed for the existing post holders of Director of Neighbourhoods and Director of Communities;
- (4) That the leaving date for the Director of Communities be mutually agreed between the post holder and the Head of Paid Service on the basis that sufficient senior management capacity be retained until the appointment of any new Strategic Directors;
- (5) That the role of Acting Chief Executive be continued to be undertaken by the Director of Neighbourhoods, whose substantive post Director of Neighbourhoods would be deleted, as per the decision of Full Council on the 22 February 2018; and
- (6) That, in order to better reflect the support needs of the revised Management Board Structure, the number of Executive Assistant roles be reduced from five to one, following the normal consultation arrangements of the Council and within the existing Redundancy Policy.

**CHAIRMAN**