

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 22 March 2012 **Time:** 7.30 - 9.20 pm

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

Members Present:

Representing Epping Forest District Council:

Councillor(s): K Angold-Stephens (Chairman), B Rolfe and Mrs P Smith

Other Councillors:

Councillor(s): J Philip

Representing Essex County Council:

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

Representing Local Councils:

Mrs L Peters, Mrs J Ballard (Roydon Parish Council), Mrs D Borton (Nazeing Parish Council), Mrs V Evans, Mrs S De Luca (North Weald Parish Council), B Surtees (Ongar Town Council), Mrs E K Walsh (Loughton Town Council), Councillor Mrs J Bowerman (Matching Parish Council), Mrs S Jackman (Ongar Town Council), Miss H Nicholas (Roydon Parish Council), K Avey (Epping Hemnall), Councillor A Barr (Lambourne Parish Council), Councillor E Borton (Nazeing Parish Council), S Bosworth (Willingale Parish Council), Councillor Ms G Castle (Nazeing Parish Council), R Church (Buckhurst Hill Parish Council), Councillor B Miller (Epping Upland Parish Council), Richardson, A Tadjrishi (Epping Town Council) and J M Whitehouse (Epping Hemnall)

Apologies:

Epping Forest District Council –

Councillor(s): R Morgan and B Sandler

Essex County Council –

Councillor(s): V Metcalfe

Parish/Town Councils: -

Mrs K Richmond (Waltham Abbey Town Council), R Northwood (Sheering Parish Council), R Balcombe (Fyfield Parish Council) and Councillor Mrs N Bridge (Fyfield Parish Council)

Officers Present:

I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), K Polyzoides (Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation)), G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Assistant)

By Invitation:

17. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant to the Chief Executive 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.

18. MINUTES**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 3 November 2011 be agreed subject to the following amendments:

- Minute 12(b) Forum changing to Forums;
- Councillor Metcalfe in attendance; and
- Councillor Mrs J Whitehouse attending as a representative of Essex County Council.

19. MATTERS ARISING

The Assistant to the Chief Executive advised that the County Council were consulting on the revised Essex Wide Partnership arrangements regarding the demise of the Local Area Forums. Dialogue was on going and a number of possible options were available for the Epping Forest District . The options were;

1. A Locality Board comprising of County Division Members and District Councillors;
2. A Locality Board based on the existing quarterly meetings of MP's, County Division Members, District Council Cabinet Members and the Chairman of the Locals Councils' Association;
3. The existing "One Epping Forest" Local Strategic Partnership, Understanding the function of a Locality Board;
4. A hybrid of options of 2 and 3; or
5. A locality Board based on the current Local Councils' Liaison Committee.

The County Council are also looking at draft proposals for the new Highways Panels. When further details are made available, the Acting Chief Executive would circulate the information to the Town and Parish Councils. In the mean time the Director of Environment and Street Scene, J Gilbert would be addressing a number of the District Councils panels about the County Councils Highways Panels proposals.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee would await further information from the Chief Executive and County Council.

20. LOCAL PLAN

The Committee received a report from the Assistant Director Policy and Conservation (Planning), K Polyzoides regarding the progress of the Council's Local Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework would be issued and come into effect on 27 March 2012; replacing all but one of the current Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and a small number of circulars.

The Council had appointed consultants, Nathaniel Lichfield Partners to work on the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) and the information will be fed into the Issues and Options document starting the consultations in July 2012. A briefing has been arranged for the 30 March 2012, for District Members and Locals Councils, where the consultants would be presenting their methodology and findings allowing the opportunity for questions and comments. Other evidence based works in the coming months would also include a Heritage Review, Carbon Reduction Strategy and an Assessment of Open Spaces & Recreation Facilities.

The District Council had appointed consultants Fortismere Associates to assist in the project management of the Council's Local Plan, offering advice on timetable and providing a 'critical friend' review of evidence base documents.

The anticipated submission for the new Local Plan was summer 2013, and would be continued to work towards. The consultation on the Issues & Options stage of the Local Plan would run from the end of July 2012 to September 2012 and would be under review for a further two weeks. The document would not set out detailed proposals for the new planning policy but identify specific issues and potential options for the District over the next 20 years, including population and household projections, strategic distribution of new housing and employment land and the information on potential development sites from the SLAA.

The Council would not be able to provide support for Neighbourhood Plans to Parish and Town Councils but would be issuing questionnaires within the next couple of weeks, to identify local priorities and request that Local Councils make arrangements for one to one visits with officers to areas to collate local information.

Town and Parish representatives commented that the briefing and presentations regarding the SLAA should be made available to more attendees and the way in which invitations responses to these events are dealt with should be reviewed. The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Technology advised that if the scheduled SLAA briefing on 30 March 2012 and the Population projections briefing on 2 April 2012 were over prescribed they could possibly look into webcasting them.

The Committee commented on the timescale that the Government had intended and the possibilities of schedules being changed but the officers felt that they would be able to complete the local plan within the timetable of the 18 months.

21. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS

(1) Update - Invite to County Councillor Mrs Tracey Chapman, Portfolio Holder and/or County Councillor P Channer, Deputy Portfolio Holder for Highways to speak on Highways issues, principally the North Essex Parking Partnership.

The Chairman noted with regret that that neither the Portfolio Holder or Deputy Portfolio Holder for Highways could attend previous Local Councils' Liaison Committee's and that the Committee felt let down by these events.

County Councillor G McEwen advised that his colleagues sent their apologies for being to unable to attend, although County Members had received an email about a briefing on Local Highways Panels within the County, where local people decide on the issues rather than County Council Officers. A proportion of funding would be dissolved to each District and for Epping Forest a sum had been worked out as £700,000 for traffic improvements. The panel would comprise of the 7 County Members and 7 District Members to decided on matters concerning Epping Forest District.

County Councillor Pond advised that the Parking Partnership was not within the Local Highways Panel's remit and therefore who should be contacted about the concerns regarding about parking issues and problems with the District. County Councillor McEwen reported that he would take these questions back to the County Council to get answers.

Councillor Jackman advised that EEC had given her a contact number to distribute for highways complaints, which was 0845 6037631.

The Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Highways advised that she had recently received a presentation from the Parking Partnership at District level and found this gave a lot of relevant information and enquired whether LCLC would like to have the Parking Partnership attend a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Parking Partnership would be invited to attend the LCLC on 8 November.

(2) New Standards Regime

Councillor Pond thanked District Council Officers, I Willett and C O Boyle for their recent Briefing on the new standards regime and also the Essex Monitoring Group that have become a National Leader in setting the ground rules, following the demise of the Standards board on the 30 June 2012. He advised that hopefully there would be some consistency between the tiers of Local government, County, District and Parish/Town. The Essex Association of Local Councils discussed forming a joint committee for Parish and Town Complaints, and the County and District to have their own Standards Committee. The District Monitoring Officer would also act as the Parish and Town Councils Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Pond had drafted some thoughts on a constitution for the Standards Regime and had requested comments from the Parish and Town Councils. Once the comments had been received, a small working party would be formed. A report had been submitted to the District Council Meeting on the 27 March 2012, for the District to consider options for the new Standards regime and also agree none discretionary items.

Councillor Pond enquired about advise from the District Council Finance Officer regarding the precept of the Standards Committee. The Assistant to the Chief Executive advised that he would investigate and advise.

RESOLVED:

1. That Parish and Town Councils respond to Councillor Pond's draft constitution on the New Standards Regime; and
2. that the Assistant to the Chief Executive seeks advice from the Director of Finance on financial issues for the joint Standards Committees.

(3) Improved Representation

Councillor Jackman requested that all Local Councils make an attempt to attend these meetings.

22. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Assistant to the Chief Executive informed the Committee that the District Council were about to start the process for recruiting the new Chief Executive.

23. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting of the committee will take place on Thursday 5 July 2012 at 7:30 p.m. and then on the following dates:

- (a) Thursday 8 November 2012 at 7:30 p.m.; and
- (b) Thursday 7 March 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

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