

# EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

**Committee:** Council

**Date:** 5 November 2013

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

**Members Present:** Councillors Mrs M Sartin (Chairman), A Boyce (Vice-Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, K Avey, R Bassett, Mrs H Brady, W Breare-Hall, G Chambers, K Chana, T Church, Mrs R Gadsby, L Girling, P Gode, Mrs A Grigg, J Hart, Ms J Hart, D Jacobs, Mrs S Jones, Ms H Kane, P Keska, J Knapman, Ms Y Knight, Mrs J Lea, L Leonard, A Lion, Mrs M McEwen, J Markham, A Mitchell MBE, R Morgan, J Philip, Mrs C Pond, B Rolfe, Ms G Shiell, Mrs P Smith, P Spencer, D Stallan, Ms S Stavrou, Mrs T Thomas, H Ulkun, Mrs L Wagland, G Waller, Ms S Watson, A Watts, Mrs E Webster, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, N Wright and J Wyatt

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs T Cochrane, R Cohen, H Mann, G Mohindra, B Sandler and D Wixley

**Officers Present:** G Chipp (Chief Executive), J Leither (Democratic Services Assistant), G Lunnun (Assistant Director (Democratic Services)), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive), C O'Boyle (Director of Corporate Support Services), R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT), R Perrin (Democratic Services Assistant), P Seager (Chairman's Secretary), I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive) and T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer)

## 51. 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.

## 52. MINUTES

### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2013 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

## 54. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) **Announcements by the Chairman of the Council**

(i) **The Roydon Play area**

The Chairman reported that she attended the official opening of a Play area within her ward in Roydon, which had come about through local parents efforts and the Parish Council and had been funded by the County Council.

**(ii) Youth Celebrations – 29 October 2013**

The Chairman reported that the Youth Council had held a Youth Celebrations event at the Civic Offices on 29 October 2013 to celebrate different youth groups within the District. The event was held to recognise the volunteer groups and promote a travel card wallet and volunteering guide for young people which had been produced by the Youth Council. The Chamber was transformed by lighting and music with the evenings entertainment including singers, dancers and musicians. Certificates were handed out to the youth groups and guest speakers spoke about the volunteering opportunities. She advised that it had been an inspiring evening and very informative about what the District provides for volunteering, training and funding for young people.

**(iii) Epping Forest District Museum Closure and Refurbishment**

The Chairman reported that she attended the closing party of the Epping Forest Museum in Waltham Abbey on 1 November 2013. The event celebrated the start of a 18 month refurbishment provided by Heritage Lottery funding, which would create more space for collections, an activity room and a lift, making the museum more accessible to all, due to be completed by 2015.

**(iv) Red Cross Essex Branch Annual Assembly**

The Chairman reported that she had attended the Red Cross Essex Branch Annual Assembly which had included the celebration of two long service awards for residents within the District. The first being Councillor Morgan's wife, Mrs Jean Morgan, for 25 years service and Kay Ericson for over 40 years service, although one member at the event had received an award for over 60 years service.

**(v) Floral Display**

The Chairman announced the she intended to send the flowers from tonight's meeting to Alder House, Cheshire Home in Chigwell.

**(b) Announcements by the Leader of the Council**

The Leader advised that he had no announcements to be made under this heading.

**(c) Announcements by Portfolio Holders**

There were no announcements to be made under this heading.

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

**(a) North Weald Airfield**

**(i) By Mr T Blanks to Councillor Grigg, Asset Management and Economic Development**

"Now that the future of North Weald Airfield has been resolved and secured by EFDC what immediate and long term plans do the Council have to improve the airfield's financial viability?"

**Response by Councillor Grigg, Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

“Whilst acknowledging the real progress that the Cabinet has made in relation to the future of North Weald Airfield, with particular reference to the commissioning of the Drivers Jonas Deloitte report and the decision taken at the Cabinet on the 22 July 2013, I would sound a note of caution that much work still needs to be done.

The master planning exercise approved by Cabinet is in hand. Consultants has been appointed, with a brief to report on the first phase of their work by Christmas 2013, and phase two by the end of March 2014.

However I can confirm that, in tandem with the on going work, the Council is actively pursuing revenue generating proposals to improve the financial viability of the Airfield. This work is being undertaken not only by officers from across the Council's Directorates but by specialist external advisers.

Whilst these projects are subject to discussion and detailed negotiation, I am not able to be specific for reasons of commercial confidentiality. I will of course report further through the appropriate channels when able.”

**56. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE**

There were no questions by Members under notice.

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

The Council received written reports from the Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, the Environment Portfolio Holder, the Finance and Technology Portfolio Holder, the Housing Portfolio Holder, the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, the Planning Portfolio Holder, the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder and the Support Services Portfolio Holder.

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

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

Councillor Whitbread advised that he had attended a joint meeting of the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives, where the Regional Returning officer for the European Parliament Elections in May 2014 gave an update on preparations. The Leader advised that they also received a presentation on the establishment of an Employment Skills Board for the County. The intention behind the new Board was to achieve a greater level of involvement and influence from the Business Community, to ensure that young people leaving Further Education had the skills and abilities that employers were practically seeking.

Continuing with the theme of young people, he advised the Council that nine apprentices had now started the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme and wished them well in their future employment with the District Council.

Councillor Whitbread reported that he had attended a event hosted by the County Council and the Phoenix Publishing and Media Group at the former Little Chef and Motel on the A414 near North Weald on the 3 October 2013. Phoenix were a major Chinese publishing company who were refurbishing the site as a centre for promoting

Chinese Cultural Industries across the UK and Europe. He stated that this initiative should attract groups of Chinese business people and tourists to the area, supporting the local economy and also produce employment opportunities.

The Leader advised that he toured the District with Councillor Kevin Bentley, the County Council Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, visiting a number of employment and tourism sites across the area. He stated that Councillor Bentley was greatly impressed with their potential and this was a useful exercise, to create a greater understanding and to identify opportunities to work together with the County Council.

Councillor Whitbread advised that another area of common interest with the County Council had been the new Waste Management Contract. He had recently met with the County Council Cabinet member responsible for waste disposal, with Councillor Breare-Hall, who had provided more detail about the County's desire to renegotiate aspects of the Inter-Authority Agreement, within his Environment Portfolio Holder report.

The Leader drew attention to the training session on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults he had attended on 26 October 2013. It had been the current focus as a result of the recent high profile cases and high level of media interest. He advised members that everyone had a duty to protect children and vulnerable adults with whom they came into contact with, in their role as elected Members and those people who use the Councils services. The Leader felt that it was very important for all members to have an appropriate level of safeguarding training, and was in discussion with officers as to how this could be achieved.

**(b) Planning Portfolio Holder**

Councillor Bassett reported that an update session for Members on the legal issues and the weight that needed to be given to the reports for the Local Plan would be on 18 November 2013.

**(c) Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder**

Councillor Webster confirmed that Stage 3 of the Tour de France would be passing through the District on 7 July 2014. The stage would start in Cambridge and go through other areas in Essex onto Willingale, Fyfield, Morton, North Weald, Epping, along the A104 through the Epping Forest, Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and into London. She advised that this would be a great way to promote the District and committed to work with Town and Parish Councils.

**58. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**(a) Leisure Strategy**

Councillor J H Whitehouse referred to the written report of the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder regarding the Leisure Strategy and asked whether the Strategy would involve just the leisure centres or the wider leisure needs and if the latter how the public would be consulted.

Councillor Webster, Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder stated that the Leisure and Cultural Strategy was in its early stages and that it would cover all aspects of leisure and cultural provision. Currently officers were gathering information and that consultation with the District's residents would be required. Councillor Webster

advised that a Portfolio Holder Decision had been signed to establish the Advisory Group on Leisure and Culture Strategy.

**(b) Mobile Homes presentation evening on 3 October 2013**

Councillor Rolfe referred to the success of the information evening regarding the Mobile Homes Act 2013 and asked if this method of communication would be used in relation to updating residents.

Councillor Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder advised that the evening had received positive feedback from all involved parties. Even though the subject matter was at times a little heavy, it was felt that further consultation and information on agreements between mobile home owners and site owners could be organised.

**(c) Car Park Tariffs**

Councillor Jacobs asked whether the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder would consider differentiating the car park tariffs across the District and with this in mind consider not increasing the first half an hour or first hour tariff.

Councillor Waller, Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that the consistent approach of the car parking tariffs across the District would become a more demand led tariff structure, dependant on the situation in each location. Parking would become the priority as a lack of parking could damage high streets. He advised members that he would keep them updated with the situation and welcome members' comments on future proposals.

**(d) Increase of Business Rate**

Councillor J Whitehouse asked the Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder which section of the economy she thought would provide the greatest growth and what action she would be taking to make these areas flourish.

Councillor Grigg, Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder advised that the Council was working towards an Economic Strategy that was a key objective, and she was awaiting evidence from a consultant, which would then be brought forward to the Cabinet. With regards to the conversions of business units to residential units, the Cabinet had brought forward the decision to purchase the Bridgeman House in Waltham Abbey and looked to keep business units. She advised that to offset the businesses moving to the Enterprise Zone in Harlow, the Council had identified a number of viable business sites in the District and would be looking to increase employment on the Airfield following the Cabinet's decision.

**(e) Green Deal**

Councillor Jenny Hart asked whether the Council would be signing up to the Green Deal provider, so that the finances could be accessed by residents.

Councillor Waller, Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that the Council had not yet signed up to the Green Deal, as it had not lived up to expectations and there were many uncertainties. He would keep the Green Deal under constant review.

**(f) Highways Panel Funding**

Councillor Leonard asked the Leader of the Council what could be done about the half a million pounds that had been reallocated from the Local Highway Panel for the provision of white lines and foot way repairs in other areas of the county.

Councillor Whitbread, Leader of the Council advised that he would prefer to see the funding spent within the District, although it was the responsibility of the County Council.

By invitation of the Council, Councillor Knapman, Chairman of the Local Highway Panel advised that there had been a year and half delay in the spending the 2011/12 funding, which had thirty projects approved by the Epping Forest Local Highway Panel. The funding from these projects would be what was being spent in the other areas of the county for white lines and footways, although the County Councillor responsible for Highways had agreed that the Council would receive some of the funding within the District.

He continued that the next tranche of funding had been made available and would implement the previous years projects, which would start in January 2014.

#### **(g) Parking Issues**

Councillor Markham referred to a resident in Clifton Road, Loughton that had to purchase a parking permit from North Essex Parking Partnership for carers who visited her husband with a terminal illness. Councillor Markham asked the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder to approach the Partnership to change this policy.

Councillor Waller, Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Transport stated that he was sorry to hear of the circumstances of that resident but that Civil Enforcement Officers were not able to make concessions themselves. He said he hoped the Partnership would view this matter sympathetically and he would be gladly liaise with the Partnership on this and similar issues in the future.

#### **(h) Waste Contract**

Councillor Angold-Stephens asked the Portfolio Holder for Environment whether he agreed that the minutes of last Cabinet meeting, regarding the Waste Contract which had made reference to a third wheeled bin should also have referred to the Council giving the consideration for an 'opt in or out' arrangement for a significant minority of residents with terrace houses or small gardens.

Councillor Breare-Hall, Portfolio Holder for Environment agreed that the 'opt and in and out' option had been mentioned at the meeting and would be considered in the complete dialogue stage of the waste procurement contract. He said in order to comment on whether this should have been minuted, he would have to review the proceedings.

#### **(i) Broadway Parking**

Councillor Jennie Hart asked the Portfolio Holder Safer, Greener and Transport whether the Broadway Parking Review was any closer and if so, could he advise of a date.

Councillor Waller, Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Transport advised that the Broadway Parking Review would take place after the Buckhurst Hill Parking Review had been completed. He advised that they were making good progress with the

Buckhurst Hill Review and he was helpful the first part would be completed early in 2014. The forecast for expenditure was not likely to over run and there should be sufficient funds to complete the both reviews.

**(j) Major Contracts and Leases - Broader Impact on Reserves**

Councillor Watson thanked the Finance and Technology Portfolio Holder for the written reply to the question she has asked at the last Council meeting regarding the account of the North Weald Airfield market operator. She pointed out that income streams were reducing which would put a strain on the Council's reserves. In light of this she asked the Portfolio Holder if anything was being done to look at the financial soundness of the market operator and others with whom the Council had a major contract or lease and if so, what impact this might have on the Council's reserves.

Councillor Stavrou, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Technology advised that the reserves and revenue were reviewed continuously, along with the external factors that could affect them. She offered to provide more detailed information to councillor Watson outside of the meeting.

**(k) Sainsbury's Redevelopment**

Councillor Knapman referred to the derelict condition of the area in the vicinity of the Sainsbury's store at The Broadway. He said he was aware plans were being discussed for refurbishment works including a new Sainsbury's store, demolition of other lock-up shop units and a new car park. He asked the Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, if she could take steps to speed up the process

Councillor Grigg the Portfolio Holder for Asset Management and Economic Development stated that Stobarts (agent for the leaseholder of the site) had closed several shops in the area with a view to redeveloping the site. She said she understood Stobarts had agreed terms with Sainsbury's for the proposals outlined by Councillor Knapman and confirmed that Council officers were having discussions regards regarding the matter. She said she anticipated submitting a report to members before the end of the year.

**59. MOTIONS**

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

**60. REPORT OF THE CABINET - 94/94A LAWTON ROAD, LOUGHTON**

**Mover: Councillor Grigg, Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

Councillor Grigg presented a report on the reasons for the release of covenants and right of pre-emption for 94/94A Lawton Road, Loughton.

**Report as first moved ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That the restrictive covenants and right of pre-emption in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of the Third Schedule of a Conveyance dated 6 January 1955 in respect of 94/94a Lawton Road, Loughton be released for the consideration of £127,500.

**61. REPORT OF THE CABINET - ESTATES AND VALUATION SECTION - ADDITIONAL POST**

**Mover: Councillor Grigg, Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

Councillor Grigg submitted a report seeking a supplementary estimate for the appointment of an additional post of a Valuation and Development Surveyor during the current financial year.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That a supplementary estimate of £12,681 be approved for 2013/14 to enable the appointment of an additional post of Valuation and Development Surveyor to be made during the current financial year.

**62. REPORT OF THE CABINET - SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL ESTIMATE - BRIDGEMAN HOUSE, WALTHAM ABBEY**

**Mover: Councillor Grigg, Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder.**

Councillor Grigg submitted a report seeking a supplementary capital estimate for the purchase of the leasehold interest in the second floor of Bridgeman House, Waltham Abbey and the possible refurbishment work if required.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That a supplementary capital estimate in the sum of £654,000 be approved for the purchase of the leasehold interest in the second floor of Bridgeman House, Waltham Abbey and to the carrying out of refurbishment work, if required.

**63. 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 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Morgan informed the Council that Youth Council would be attending the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting on the 26 November 2013.

**(b) Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Chairman announced that there were no reports to be considered under this item.

**(c) Reports of Overview and Scrutiny Panels**



The Chairman announced that there were no reports to be considered under this item.

**64. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - SCHEME OF OFFICER DELEGATION FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL FUNCTIONS - PROPOSED CHANGES**

**Mover: Councillor Wyatt, Vice Chairman of the Committee**

Councillor Wyatt presented a report proposing revisions to the Scheme of Delegation to allow prior approval applications submitted as a result of the recent changes to permitted development rights to be determined by the Director of Planning and Economic Development with the Proper Officer making the consequential amendments to the Constitution.

**Councillor Wyatt sort leave of the Council to amend paragraph g) of Appendix A ( Matters to be Determined by the Relevant Committee)to read;**

“(g) Applications, including certificate of lawfulness in respect of existing use and development’ recommended for approval contrary to an objection from a local council which are material to the planning merits of the proposal.”

**First Amendment moved by Councillor Watts and seconded by Councillor Knapman**

“That paragraph (g) be removed from Appendix A (Matters to be Determined by the Relevant Committee) and that a protocol be drawn up and submitted to the District Development Control Committee for consideration on how the words ‘which are material to the planning merits’ should be determined..

**Withdrawn**

**Second Amendment moved by Councillor Watts and seconded by Councillor Knapman**

“That the District Development Control Committee conduct a review of the operation of (paragraph g) of Appendix A (Matters to be Determined by the Relevant Committee)taking account of how often a local council objection has been ruled out of consideration on grounds of not being material to the planning merits.”

**Carried**

**Report as amended including the amendment of the Vice Chairman ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

**(1) That the changes to officer delegation in respect of Council Development Control Functions underlined in Appendix 1 to these minutes be approved;**

**(2) That the proper officer makes consequential amendments to the Constitution; and**

**(3) That the District Development Control Committee conduct a review of the operation (paragraph g) of Appendix A as amended taking**

account of how often a Local Council objects has been ruled out as not being a material planning consideration.

**65. REPORT OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE - HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY**

**Mover: Councillor Angold-Stephens, Chairman of the Committee**

Councillor Angold-Stephens presented a report recommending the adoption of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy attached in Appendix 2 to these minutes be adopted.

**66. APPOINTMENTS TO VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES/PANEL**

The Council considered nominations to fill vacancies which had arisen on the Audit and Governance Committee, the District Development Committee and Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That Councillor Leonard be appointed a member of the Audit and Governance Committee for the remainder of the current municipal year;

(2) That Councillor Jennie Hart be appointed a member of the District Development Control Committee for the remainder of the municipal year;

(3) That the nomination of Councillor Mann to fill the vacancy on the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

**67. AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - REPORT OF RECRUITMENT PANEL**

Councillor Watts presented a report advising of the decision of the Appointment Panel appointed by the Council to select a co-opted member on the Audit and Governance Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That the decision of the Appointment Panel appointed by the Council, to select Mr A Jarvis of Chigwell, to fill the vacancy for a co-opted member on the Audit and Governance Committee with effect from 26 September 2013, be noted.

**68. CALL-IN AND URGENCY - ALL WEATHER PITCH, TOWN MEAD, WALTHAM ABBEY**

The Council noted that the Chairman of the Council had agreed that the decision of the Leader of the Council (a) to waive the requirements of Contract Standing Order C4 (Chief Officer to obtain at least three quotations for contracts exceeding £25,000

but not exceeding £50,000) and, (b) to accept a quotation in the sum of £45,635.13 from S & C Slatter as the most financially advantageous for the completion of the All Weather Pitch at Town Mead, Waltham Abbey, should be treated as a matter of urgency and should not be subject to call-in.

**69. LEADER DECISION - NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD AND ASSET MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE**

The Council noted a decision taken by the Leader of the Council to amend the terms of reference and title of the North Weald Airfield and Asset Management Cabinet Committee. The Leader clarified the title as the Asset Management and Economic Development Cabinet Committee.

**70. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

The Chairman informed members that there were no reports to be considered on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations.

The Chairman advised that reports from representations on the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills, Stansted Airport Community Trust Fund and one other would be reported at the next Council meeting on 17 December 2013.

**CHAIRMAN**