

# **EPPING FOREST LOCAL COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE**

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices,  
High Street, Epping      **Date:** Wednesday, 2nd November,  
2005

**Room:** Council Chamber      **Time:** 8.00 pm

**Democratic Services Officer:** Gary Woodhall (tel: 01992 - 56 4470)  
email: gwoodhall@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

### **Members:**

#### **District Council Representatives:**

Councillors B Sandler (Chairman), K Faulkner, Mrs A Haigh, R Morgan and  
Mrs J H Whitehouse

#### **Local Council Representatives:**

Clerks and Chairmen/Members of Parish and Town Councils

#### **County Council Representatives:**

Members for the following wards:

North Weald and Nazeing:	Councillor A Jackson
Loughton Central:	Councillor C Pond
Ongar and Rural:	Councillor G McEwen
Epping and Theydon Bois:	Councillor T Spencer
Buckhurst Hill and Loughton South:	Councillor C Finn
Chigwell and Loughton Broadway:	Councillor M Tomkins
Waltham Abbey:	Councillor Mrs E Webster

---

**A DEMONSTRATION OF THE COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WILL BE GIVEN  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER STARTING AT 7.00pm.**

**THEREFORE, PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MEETING WILL COMMENCE AT 8.00pm.**

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. MINUTES**

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005  
(previously circulated) and matters arising.

**3. ISSUES RAISED BY LOCAL COUNCILS (Pages 5 - 8)**

To consider the issues raised in respect of planning by the Local Councils, as outlined in Appendix 1.

**4. PARISH REVIEWS**

Following a review of the May 2005 election, concern was raised on behalf of one small parish council about funding for unforeseen elections. This is a matter on which the District Council has made representations to the Electoral Commission, which is currently advising the Government on the funding of elections.

It was felt that it would be helpful at this meeting if local councils were advised of the opportunities available for changing the parish pattern of the District. In theory, larger parishes should make the financial planning for elections easier than in the small parish councils that operate in some parts of the District.

The District Council emphasises that this item is purely for information. The District Council has no policy of instigating such reviews, although on a few occasions in recent years, the issue has been raised.

A handout will be available at the meeting.

**5. APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT/TOWN/PARISH CHARTER WORKING GROUP**

To note the District Council appointments.

At the Council meeting held on 28 July 2005, EFDC appointed Councillors Morgan, Mrs Haigh and Sandler to be its' representatives on the District/Town and Parish Council Charter Review. They will sit with Town/Parish representatives Councillors Borton, Salter and Mrs Woods.

**6. REMUNERATION SCHEMES**

Local councils are reminded to bring forward proposals for introducing remuneration schemes or amending them so that the Independent Parish Remuneration Panel may consider them.

**7. CODE OF CONDUCT AND PLANNING PROTOCOL TRAINING**

Local Councils are asked to consider whether there is a demand for a further training course in these subjects.

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for the following date:

1 March 2006

APPENDIX 1

ESSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

EPPING FOREST BRANCH

Greenleaves  
Hoe Lane  
Nazeing  
Essex  
EN9 2RG

Telephone: 01992 893163

6<sup>th</sup> October 2005

John Scott  
Joint Chief Executive  
Epping Forest District Council  
High Street  
Epping  
CM16 4BZ

Dear

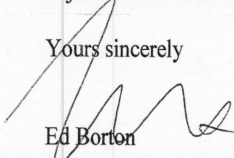
**Liaison Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2005**

At our usual preparatory meeting last night there was a discussion about the items to be included in the agenda for the forthcoming liaison meeting. It was agreed that the time could best be spent on planning matters. This decision was prompted by the differences over the St. John School application, unsuccessful suggestions from Loughton Town Council about the content of planning notices, recognition of the backlog in enforcement cases and a recent letter from Barry Land about local council objections.

There is no great wish to churn through past arguments but there is a strong feeling that best results are not being achieved at the moment and a fresh approach is needed. From the local council standpoint there are perceptions that their representations of residents' views are not always understood by District officers and councillors. Whilst most imposed planning conditions are sensible it is believed that there can be an over reliance that others will successfully control questionable applications when enforcement is known to be under stress. This is particularly the case over times and days of commercial operations. There are District councillors who think that local councils raise too many objections.

What is needed is a genuine debate about these issues backed up with some relevant statistics. For example, we hear a lot about Government targets for an 8 week turnaround and we see regular reports on the success or otherwise at appeals. Without seeking the creation of extra work would it be possible to see a report showing the recent numbers of applications, local objections and final decisions broken down by council?

Yours sincerely

  
Ed Borton

cc Councillor Jason Salter

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL JT CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
Rec'd:	7 - OCT 2005
Ack:	.....
Referred to:	.....
File:	.....

Date: 23 September 2005

Our ref: PL/BL

Clerks of Parish & Town Councils

Barry Land (01992) 564110  
email: bland@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

#### **Objections to Planning Applications**

I am prompted to write to all the parish and town councils as a result of comments made to me by a number of district councillors regarding applications for relatively minor matters that have been included on the agendas of district council's Area Plans Sub-committees.

There is a concern that the committee's time is being taken up with some minor issues that only appear on the agenda because of an objection raised by a local council. Individual members have often taken time to visit the sites and then spend time having the case introduced at committee but find that the issue is of minor significance and the objection unfounded.

The approval of delegated powers to the Head of Planning & Economic Development is intended to avoid the need for minor matters to be reported to members so that issues of wider concern and contentious to a number of people can be properly debated with sufficient time devoted to them. Of course, members also have other duties outside of Planning which demand their attention and are anxious that they are only asked to get involved with those cases of real contention.

As you are aware, whenever a planning application attracts an objection from a local council and officers feel the application can be granted, the case is always reported to committee. Therefore, the plea is that objections are only raised after very serious consideration and relate to issues wider than simply, say, loss of light to a neighbour or a preference for a garage rather than a parking space. Neighbours are consulted separately, as you know, and Council policies are all applied in any event.

From my point of view, I must seek to determine all applications in the shortest possible time and applications referred to committee very often exceed the 8 weeks allowed to me simply because they have to wait for a committee meeting in their 4-week cycle. I also fear that long committee agendas could result in cases towards the end not receiving the attention they might warrant.

Of course, I do not wish to dissuade you from raising local issues that you feel we may not be aware of nor from objecting to schemes that deserve your criticism after careful thought and, indeed, most of the time comments raised are entirely valid, but from time to time the problems discussed above occur to everyone's frustration.

If I, or a member of my team, can be of any help to your considerations in the future, please give me a call.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Land".

B. J. Land  
Asst. Head of Planning Services

This page is intentionally left blank