

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

Committee: Council **Date:** 25 February 2021

Place: Virtual Meeting on Zoom **Time:** 7.00 - 9.28 pm

Members Present: Councillors H Kane (Chairman), J Share-Bernia, N Avey, R Baldwin, R Bassett, A Beales, N Bedford, P Bolton, H Brady, R Brookes, L Burrows, D Dorrell, I Hadley, S Heap, S Heather, R Jennings, J Jennings, S Jones, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Lea, J Leppert, A Lion, C McCredie, J McIvor, R Morgan, S Murray, S Neville, M Owen, A Patel, J Philip, C P Pond, C C Pond, B Rolfe, B Sandler, M Sartin, P Stalker, D Stocker, D Sunger, B Vaz, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

Apologies: Councillors L Mead, A Mitchell, D Plummer, S Rackham, C Roberts and D Roberts

Officers Present: G Blakemore (Chief Executive), N Boateng (Service Manager (Legal) & Monitoring Officer), T Carne (Corporate Communications Team Manager), N Dawe (Chief Operating Officer), C Hartgrove (Interim Chief Financial Officer), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), J Leither (Democratic Services Officer), P Seager (Chairman's Officer), A Small (Strategic Director Corporate and 151 Officer) and G Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services)

Guests: Mr S Lye (Chairman and Independent Member of the Member Remuneration Panel) and Parish Councillor T Blanks (North Weald Parish Council)

59. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Democratic and Electoral Services Team Manager 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.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of member Conduct, Councillor S Murray declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 16, which was moved to Item 12 (Member Remuneration Panel) by virtue of knowing the independent member Mr Stephen Lye, who would be presenting the report. Councillor S Murray advised that he would remain in the meeting for this item.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of member Conduct, Councillor C Whitbread declared a non-pecuniary interest in the agenda, by virtue being the Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Finance. Councillor C Whitbread advised that he would remain in the meeting and be a voting member.

61. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Council meetings held on 17 December 2020 and 08 February 2021 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

62. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman informed members that due to the Covid-19 restrictions there was nothing to report at this time.

63. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

Question by North Weald Parish Councillor T Blanks to Councillor A Patel (Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder)

"The report on the Council Agenda on the Finance and Performance of Qualis covers Quarter 4 of the first year of operation up to 31 October 2020 being its accounting reference date.

The commentary with the report states at para 1.10 on page 166 of the Agenda that 'the single year Business Plan recently presented to, and agreed by the Council, for the Qualis 2nd year of trading, forecasts a small surplus in the period up to 31 October 2021. This effectively being the first full year of full trading operations.'

Therefore my question is, has someone forgotten that the Registrar of Companies agreed the Qualis application on 27 January 2021 to change the accounting reference date to 30 September, meaning that the next accounts due will be for 11 months and would the reports to the Council be changed to reflect this?"

Response given by Councillor A Patel (Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder)

When the business plan for one year was drawn up and approved this was done on a business year ending 31st October. A change to the 30th September allowed data from Qualis to be considered in EFDC's Budget for the following year.

The change was approved by EFDC's shareholder representative, after the original Qualis monitoring report to Cabinet had been published. The change will mean a small reduction in Qualis' reported surplus as it would arise from only 11 months of trading.

Supplementary question by North Weald Parish Councillor T Blanks to Councillor A Patel (Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder)

Most Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCo's) have the same year end date as the Council owners to simplify financial reporting, there are charges and recharges between the Qualis companies and the Council who have different external auditors as well as different year ends, which add to the administrative costs and confusion. Therefore why have the Council opted for different year end dates for Qualis and EFDC for at least the next five years.

Supplementary question response given by Councillor A Patel (Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder)

The Council undertakes an annual budget setting process and the reason EFDC and Qualis had different year ends was that it allowed the Council six months before the budget setting process took place and that then allowed the Council enough time to consider what level of Council Tax needed to be set at when the audit needed to be approved. The audit took place this year on the 21 January and by moving the Qualis year-end by one month this would allow more time to consider the Qualis year-end report and the Council anticipate significant money to be generated from Qualis.

64. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

The Council noted that there were no members questions given under notice that had been submitted for consideration at this meeting.

65. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER & MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Council received written reports from Portfolio Holders. The Chairman invited the Leader of Council to provide an oral report and the opportunity for other members of the Cabinet to give updates on matters concerning their relevant portfolios.

(a) Leader of Council

Councillor C Whitbread stated that the Covid-19 vaccination programme roll-out was well established, it was good news for the Country and for the Epping Forest district bringing positive signs with a timetable to unlock the Country which would bring back some normality into the daily lives of people.

He advised that he had been attending numerous meetings on a regular basis, in his capacity as Leader of Council, including the Covid-19 Local Outbreak Board. The Board had been looking at controlling the Covid-19 outbreaks and as had been reported in the news Brentwood were undergoing additional test and trace procedures due to the South African variant. He stated that he was pleased to report the figures for the Epping Forest district had been falling and continued to fall which was positive news. Members of the EFDC Cabinet have brought forward their reports to the meeting which start to show the way forward and the recovery following the Pandemic, this would be one of the Councils main focuses in the weeks and months ahead.

Councillor J Philip will be reporting the Councils Budget at this meeting and I am pleased to say it was an excellent Budget and would set the theme for the coming year

(b) Housing and Community Services Portfolio Holder

Councillor H Whitbread advised that she had recently attended a housing webinar which gave her the opportunity to engage with tenants. It was a good way of communicating with tenants and for them to be able to ask questions of officers. The event was well attended and hopefully these webinars will continue regularly.

Councillor Whitbread also advised that she had met with the Youth Council and the High Sheriff of Essex and was asked some very challenging questions from the Youth Councillors. She felt it was good to keep in touch with the Youth Council and that was something she had done regularly throughout the year.

The Festival of Culture which was ongoing with lots of digital engagement programmes from wild life to music and was good to celebrate culture across the

district. The Digital Inclusion projects were continuing to help people with social isolation particularly in Shelley, Ongar and Paternoster, Waltham Abbey.

(c) Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder

Councillor N Bedford advised that recently the Planning team had become aware of a Government bid that was available for the National Model Design Code and the Council hastily put together a bid with the co-operation and collaboration of working with North Weald Parish Council a bid has been put forward and the result will be known shortly. The National Model Design Code sets out design considerations around the masterplanning areas and as North Weald would be one of the first areas coming forward in the Local Plan a successful bid would enable North Weald to have some control over the design on the masterplanning area.

(d) Customer and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder

Councillor S Kane advised that he would like to update his report on page 33 of the agenda where it stated 'There are 8 vacancies in ICT due to the restructuring'. There had been a successful advertising campaign leaving just 1 vacancy in ICT and now all work would be able to be carried out in house and not by external companies.

66. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

The Chairman thanked Members for giving notification of their intention to ask a question without notice.

(a) Biographies of Qualis Directors published on the Qualis Website

Councillor S Heap stated that in response to a freedom of information request, ref 1582, it was stated that biographies of all Qualis directors would be published on the Qualis website. He stated that this had been partially done but that the biographies were not full and complete. He asked the Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder would these be reviewed and it was also stated that the directors have "no prior connection with proposed developments in Epping Forest". Was this statement correct?

Councillor A Patel replied that he did not have the answer to the question but that he would find out and report back to Councillor Heap.

(b) Covid-19

Councillor S Neville asked the Leader of Council would he agree that the figures for Covid-19 across the District were decreasing, which was good news and that the vaccination programme was progressing very well but that we as a District should still air some caution and keep following the safety guidelines as the Council would not want the figures to start increasing again.

Councillor C Whitbread stated that the presentation by the Prime Minister earlier in the week was sensible and measured. It had been a really tough year and it was important to continue to follow the Governments guidelines. The vaccination programme was progressing well over the District and the Country and everyone should stay at home where possible and stick to the rules. The Council were busy preparing for the future to bounce back when the lockdown ended.

(c) Clean Air Zone Advisory Panel

Councillor P Stalker asked the Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder if he could give an update on the advisory panel to look at the mitigation strategies needed to avoid a Clean Air Zone and when they were going to meet and reflecting on the recent call-in from the LRA, the Liberal Democrats and others for more development in the green belt, would he comment on the impact this might have on the rural parts of the district, one of which was represented in my ward that they seem not to care about.

Councillor N Bedford replied that it had taken some time to get organised due to the calendar of meetings but we have now got a Democratic Services Officer appointed and responses back from Councillors. The Councillors that are to make up the advisory panel are: Councillor S Heap, representing the Green Party, Councillor Jon Whitehouse, representing the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Chris Pond representing the LRA. The Conservative group will be represented by myself as Chairman, Councillor P Stalker, Councillor P Keska and Councillor D Dorrell. The first meeting was scheduled for the 3 March 2021 at 5.30pm to discuss the aspirations of the Panel followed by the second meeting on the 23 March 2021 where there will be a presentation by AECOM and a discussion around the terms of reference.

With regard to building in the north of the District, the Local Plan was submitted to the Inspector and the development was structured across the district. The Council was working to minimise the take up of the green belt and moving to build in the north of the District would have a massive impact on the SAC. To land grab in the north of the district would not mitigate anything as nearly all of the district was within 6.2 miles of the SAC and this in turn would have a massive impact on Epping, Sheering and the surrounding areas which needed to be avoided especially as it would mean grabbing even more of the green belt.

(d) Epping Forest Care and Repair Service

Councillor J H Whitehouse stated that at a previous Council meeting in October 2020 she had asked under the item 'Joint Arrangements and External Organisations' for a report on the Epping Forest Care and Repair service (CARE). Nothing was reported at the meeting in December 2020 and she advised that she had contacted the Councillors who were appointed to that body and was told that CARE no longer existed. CARE used to administer a handy person scheme for older homeowners and had a vetted list of traders which was very much valued by the older homeowners. My question to the Housing and Community Services Portfolio Holder was were are the services now and how was the handy person scheme being advertised.

Councillor H Whitbread apologised for not getting back directly to the Council. She advised that she would give Councillor Whitehouse a written response so that she could answer the question in more depth.

(e) Distribution of Grants to Businesses in the District

Councillor P Keska asked the Customer and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder if he could give Members an update on the distribution of grants to businesses in the district and could he comment on future plans to reach those that may have missed out.

Councillor S Kane advised that Rob Pavey and his team have over the past few months have done a fantastic job of distributing the Government funded grant scheme. The administration of the scheme had rules and guidance which varied with different qualifying criteria with the whole process being further complicated as we

moved through the various tiers of lockdown with an associated grant for each tier. To date the Council have distributed almost £40 million pounds worth of grants with over 6,000 individual claims being processed. Presently there were 103 claims still to be determined.

The Council were currently working with ECC for additional grant relief funds to further support other areas which may have been excluded from the grant support scheme or that had failed to be noticed or assisted.

(f) Debden Library

Councillor S Murray stated that given Essex County Council's ill-considered plan for Debden Library with the College which had now fallen through could the Leader of Council give a serious undertaking to investigate the possibility and indeed promote the possibility of Debden library going back to its rightful place on the Broadway in one of the EFDC shop units. This would increase the footfall on the Broadway and would act as an anchor for other businesses on the Broadway.

Councillor C Whitbread advised that he would have discussion with the Essex County Council Cabinet Member for libraries and would explore the opportunities that Councillor Murray had put forward this evening. He stated he would further discuss this with Councillor Murray to furnish him with more details.

(g) Centric Parade, Loughton

Councillor D Sunger asked the Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder if could he update Members on the Centric Parade from 202-226 High Road Loughton and comment on the various rumours that were being spread about the various vacant shops.

Councillor A Patel advised that the Council had purchased the freehold of Centric Parade Loughton from 202-226 in December 2019 for a net sum of £18.645 million there was no VAT to be paid on this purchase. Including the stamp duty, land tax and legal services which brought the total spend to £19.834 million. Situated above the retails premises were 9 residential flats and 1 office tenant.

With the exception of the former Pak Choi restaurant at 202 Centric Parade the commercial premises were all let. The Pak Choi premises was subject to an agreement for lease to McDonalds, conditional on receipt of suitable planning permission. The planning permission was granted on the 1 June 2020 at Area Plans South Sub-Committee was subject to several extra conditions that were unfortunately unacceptable to McDonalds and they terminated the agreement to lease the premises.

Due to the Covid Pandemic and further lockdowns the Council have also received back shops from various tenants, Clinton Cards, Rush Hair, Percy Ingles and Thomas Cook. In addition both New Look and Clarkes have entered into a CVA (Company Voluntary Arrangement).

Due to New Look entering into a CVA they were paying less than half of the rent and the Council had now given them notice as another tenant had been found and would be paying the market value.

The vacant premises have been marketed and despite Covid there had been a significant amount of interest and advanced discussions were in progress.

(h) Clean Air Zones – ECC Liberal Democrat Newsletter

Councillor L Burrows asked the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder if he was aware of the recent fake newsletter from the Liberal Democrats claiming that they were against the Clean Air Zone and that this week the Liberal Democrats at Essex County Council called for local residents to pay £7 million extra on their Council Tax to pave the way for Clean Air Zones in Essex.

Councillor J Philip stated that he had received the newsletter which did have a degree of inaccuracy in it and he was also aware of the amendment put forward by the ECC Liberal Democrats to put forward money from Council Tax to fund Clean Air Zones. He advised that it was for £2 million and not £7 million in terms of the budget for the Clean Air Zones.

He further advised that EFDC had not set aside any money in their budget for the implementation of a Clean Air Zone in Epping Forest. The Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder had set up an advisory group to look at appropriate ways to make sure that Epping Forest did not need a Clean Air Zone and the Council was against spending money which wasn't needed. If the Council can preserve the forest without a Clean Air Zone that was definitely the right direction to be going. The key here has been consistency all along and what the Council say they will do they can be trusted to do it.

(i) The Landmark Building, The Broadway, Loughton

Councillor D Wixley stated that his question was to the Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder and advised that it was a repeat of his question asked at the last Council meeting when the Portfolio Holder was absent.

He advised that for several weeks there had been scaffolding up at the Landmark Building and it looked like there was work being done on the cladding, therefore concern had arisen whether the cladding was safe from a fire point of view and if there was an issue. If there was an issue would the Council have to bear the cost of any such remedial work or would it be down to the company that built the building.

Councillor A Patel stated that EFDC were aware that a Government office had identified the Landmark Building in Debden as having ACM cladding and that Higgins Homes had been instructed by the Government to remove the ACM cladding. The building is leased to Higgins Homes on a long lease from EFDC and therefore an active interest was taken by EFDC to ensure that the works were carried out and asked for regular updates on the progress of the works. The ACM cladding was only installed on a section above the main doorway.

On the 20 January 2021 Higgins Homes advised that all the ACM cladding had now been removed.

(j) Country Care Volunteers

Councillor C McCredie stated that her question was to the Environmental and Technical Services Portfolio Holder following on from his report regarding Country Care, page 43 of the agenda, where he reported that Peter Spence who had been a volunteer for 30 years. Mr Spence had unfortunately passed away and she asked if the Portfolio Holder would recognise the value of the volunteers.

Councillor N Avey replied that the volunteers are superb and do a great job and are very valued members of the Country Care team.

(k) DaRT87 Demand Responsive Transport Trial

Councillor J M Whitehouse advised that his question was to the Environmental and Technical Services Portfolio Holder regarding the bus route 87 that was currently being trialled and agreed that during the current lockdown it probably wasn't a good time to trial the service but stipulated that it was an important link between the various communities the service covered. He asked for an update of what the next steps were, considering that the funding would run out shortly.

Councillor N Avey advised that there would be a report going to the next Cabinet meeting on next steps on the DaRT87 service.

(l) Council House Building Programme

Councillor J McIvor asked the Housing and Community Services Portfolio Holder if she could give an update on Cyril Hawkins Close in North Weald and an update on the Council House Building programme.

Councillor H Whitbread advised that she had been to view Cyril Hawkins Close in North Weald and was pleased to report that the 12 new family high quality homes were all occupied with plenty of parking spaces.

The Council's House Building Programme was progressing well Phase 4 was currently in progress and Phase 5 sites were being considered for progressing where 500 more homes were hoped to be delivered.

67. MOTIONS

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

68. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

Mover: Councillor S Kane, Customer and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder

Councillor S Kane presented a report regarding the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22, which was required by Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 and set out details of the Council's current practices and policies. This specifically included 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 2021/22 attached to these minutes be adopted.

REORDER OF AGENDA

The Chairman advised that with the consent of the Council, the report under agenda item 16, Member Remuneration Panel would be brought forward as the next item of business.

69. MEMBER REMUNERATION PANEL

The Chairman of the Remuneration Panel, Mr S Lye presented a report following the annual review of the Epping Forest District Members' Allowances Scheme, which set out the Panels conclusions and recommendations with regard to the application of members' allowances for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

Basic Allowance

(1) That, for the 2021/22 municipal year, no change be made to the level of Basic Allowance of £4,300.00 per member per annum, currently included in the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme;

(2) That for 2022/23 and future municipal years, the Council be encouraged to increase the Basic Allowance to bring the Council up to the level of the Basic Allowance paid by other Councils;

Special Responsibility Allowance

(3) That for the 2021/22 municipal year, no changes be made to the application or implementation of the Special Responsibility Allowances currently included in the Members' Allowances Scheme;

(4) That for 2022/23 and future municipal years, the Council be encouraged to increase the implementation level of Special Responsibility Allowance applied to the responsibilities identified in the Members' Allowances Scheme, in order to achieve the full amount of each allowance;

Revised Scheme and Guidance

(5) That, subject to the above recommendations and other matters set out in the report, the Members' Allowances Scheme and Guidance for 2021/22, attached as Appendix 1 be adopted and implemented with effect from 25 May 2021;

(6) That the Statement of Implementation of the Special Responsibility Allowances set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021/22, attached as Appendix 2 be agreed; and

(7) That the Panel continue to be kept apprised of the Council's intentions regarding any future restructure proposals that directly affect the application of Special Responsibility Allowance for the specific member roles and responsibilities currently reflected in the Members' Allowances Scheme.

70. COUNCIL BUDGET 2021/22

Mover: Councillor J Philip, Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

Councillor J Philip presented a report of the Budget for 2021/22 (including Medium-Term Financial Plan, Capital Programme and Fees and Charges). He thanked Mr A

Small, Strategic Director and S151 Officer and Mr C Hartgrove, Interim Chief Financial Officer for an excellent budget and for their sound financial advice.

The Portfolio Holder added that there had been a slight error reported on page 90 of the agenda in the first table, where it stated 'Thornwood Parish Council', this should have read 'Thornwood via North Weald Parish Council'.

The Portfolio Holder stated that this had been a very challenging year in terms of Covid-19 and had a massive impact in many areas of the Council's budget. However, this was a balanced budget and he confirmed that a Council Tax freeze of 0% for 2021/22 had been applied.

There voted for the recommendations (45) namely: Councillors N Avey, R Baldwin, R Bassett, A Beales, N Bedford, P Bolton, H Brady, R Brookes, L Burrows, D Dorrell, I Hadley, S Heap, S Heather, B Jennings, J Jennings, S Jones, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Lea, J Leppert, A Lion, C McCredie, R Morgan, S Murray S Neville, M Owen, A Patel, J Philip, C C Pond, C P Pond, B Rolfe, B Sandler, M Sartin, J Share-Bernia, P Stalker, D Stocker, D Sunger, B Vaz, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the draft General Fund Revenue and Housing Revenue Account budgets for 2021/22 as presented in *Appendix A* be approved (pages 83-111 of the agenda).
- (2) That the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital programmes for 2021/22 to 2025/26 presented in *Appendix B* be approved (Pages 113-120 of the agenda).
- (3) That the updated General Fund Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2021/22 to 2025/26 presented in *Appendix A* be approved (pages 83-111 of the agenda).
- (4) That the proposed Fees and Charges for 2021/22, including an average rent increase of 1.5% on Council Dwellings, presented in *Appendix C* be approved (pages 121-147 of the agenda).
- (5) That the Section 151 Officer's report – in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 – on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2021/22 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves, presented in *Appendix D* be noted (pages 149-154 of the agenda); and
- (6) That the Section 151 Officer's recommendation to retain a minimum £4.0 million contingency balance in the Council's General Fund Reserve for the duration of the adopted Medium-Term Financial Plan be approved.

71. COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2021/22

Mover: Councillor J Philip, Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

Councillor J Philip presented a report regarding the Council Tax Setting 2021/22. He advised that the Cabinet had recommended a District Council Tax increase of 0% for 2021/22 (i.e. a freeze) at its meeting on 11th February 2021.

The procedure for Setting the Council Tax was subject to the detailed requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). This report complied with those requirements.

The preparation of the 2021/22 budget proposals, including the recommended Council Tax increase had been the subject of extensive scrutiny and consultation. The Cabinet – at its meeting held on 11th February 2021 – considered comments on the budget proposals, made by the Stronger Council Select Committee at its meeting held on 19th January 2021.

Epping Forest District Council was responsible for the billing and collection of all Council Tax due from local taxpayers. This meant that the Council was required to collect Council Tax to cover not only its own services but also the precepts set by other authorities. The Council Tax levied therefore comprised of five separate elements:

- Epping Forest District Council element
- Parish precepts
- Essex County Council precept (including Adult Social Care Services)
- Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner precept; and
- Essex County Fire and Rescue Service precept.

The procedure adhered to the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the level of Council Tax is directly related to the net expenditure of the Council after deducting income from Government grants and other sources of income. Council resolutions also adhere to legislative requirements and recommendations and are therefore written in a very formal language.

The Council Tax Base for 2021/22 is 54,018.7 and a breakdown of the calculation by parish can be seen in the first column in **Appendix A** attached.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

(1) To note that under delegated authority, the Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer, had calculated the Council Tax Base for 2021/22 for the whole Council area as 54,018.7 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended) and for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as set out in Appendix A (attached).

(2) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2021/22 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

(a) £110,508,763 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) £98,509,000 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;
- (c) £11,999,763 being the amount by which the aggregate at 13 (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 13 (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) £222.14 being the amount at 13 (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) £3,764,075 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act;
- (f) £152.46 being the amount at 13 (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;
- (g) That it be noted that Essex County Council, Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner and Essex Fire & Rescue Service 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;
- (h) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts in Appendix C as the amounts of Council Tax for 2021/22 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings; and
- (i) That in accordance with section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council determines that the amount of Council Tax shown at (9) (f) of £152.46 for 2021/22, representing an increase of 0% compared to 2020/21 was not excessive and therefore there was no requirement to hold a local referendum.

72. QUALIS QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT - Q4 2019/20

Mover: Councillor A Patel, Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder

Councillor A Patel introduced Qualis Quarterly Monitoring Report – Q4 2019/20 (Outturn).

The Governance framework for Qualis, as agreed by Cabinet on 6 February 2020, set the requirement that Qualis should report to Epping Forest District Council on its performance Quarterly.

The management report presented by Qualis covered the 4th Quarter up until the 31 October 2020, and so was effectively the year end. This 4th Quarter took longer to produce as it needed to align to the Final Accounts and Audit process. This was completed on the 21 January 2021 and so the reconciled management information had now been provided to the Council.

The first year's trading for Qualis was almost entirely taken up with set-up, governance and the appointment of a permanent staffing structure. The Coronavirus Pandemic had a significant impact in terms of delaying this whilst the Council focused on the immediate response effort. As a result, very little income was received during the first year, whilst costs were still incurred in the form of professional fees, equipment, salaries and recharges to the Council. Consequentially, the combined loss across the Qualis Group totalled £1.49 million and this would be added to the Qualis Balance Sheet and carried forward and set against future expected profits.

Despite making a loss as a Group, taxation was still payable on elements of Qualis activities and this Tax had been paid at the appropriate levels. The calculations of Tax payable have been certified by Qualis Auditors.

Whilst the original expectation was that certain activities, such as the acquisition of commercial property and the transfer of housing maintenance activities would have happened earlier in the Qualis trading year it was always envisaged that the Qualis Group would incur losses, at least in the 1st year.

The single year Business Plan recently presented to, and agreed by the Council, for the Qualis 2nd year of trading, forecasts a small surplus in the period up to 31 October 2021. This effectively being the first full year of full trading operations.

Report as first moved: **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Qualis Quarterly Monitoring Report - Q4 2019/20 (Outturn) be agreed.

73. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Council received a written report from Councillor M Sartin, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the meetings that were held on the 7 January 2021 and 2 February 2021.

Councillor Sartin advised that at its meeting on the 2 February 2021, the Committee undertook external scrutiny of the North Essex Parking Partnership. NEPP's Group Manager, Mr Walker, who gave a comprehensive overview of its operations. Members put questions to Mr Walker, some of the information he was unable to produce at that meeting but said he would get the information collated and sent to Members, that information was still awaited.

At the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 15 April 2021 the Committee would welcome the Epping Forest Youth Council and would present external scrutiny of Young People's Mental Health Services.

Councillor Sartin referred to the supplementary agenda document and advised that Mr Wyn Marshall was currently the Chairman of the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum. The Forum represented the views of the tenant's associations and acted as a consultative body for the Council on a range of housing issues. It was particularly important that tenants had a voice at this level especially in relation to the publication of the Social Housing White paper.

At a meeting of the Stronger Communities Select Committee on 14 January 2021,

the Chairman informed the Committee that a request for Mr Marshall to become a co-opted member of the Committee had been made by officers, who strongly supported this. It would ensure that tenants opinions and input would be considered in relation to Housing issues scrutinised by the Stronger Communities Select Committee.

The Council's Constitution set out rules for the management of its overview and scrutiny responsibilities. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was entitled (Article 6) to recommend to the Council the appointment of appropriate persons as non-voting co-optees on select committees.

As Mr Marshall's appointment was close to the end of this municipal year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also recommended to Council that this should continue until the end of 2021/22 when it could be reviewed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny progress report for the meetings held on 7 January and 2 February 2021 be noted; and
- (2) That Mr Wyn Marshall be appointed as a non-voting co-opted member of the Stronger Communities Select Committee until the end of the 2021/22 municipal year.

74. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS & EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

(a) Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey

The Chairman, Councillor H Kane reported that the newly appointed CEO of the Royal Gunpowder Mills had recently passed away due to Covid-19 therefore there was no update at this time.

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

CHAIRMAN

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021/22

Introduction

Epping Forest District Council is located adjacent to three outer London boroughs and on the Central Line into the City of London. Residents have easy access to major motorway routes as both the M11 and M25 run through the district. There is a high incidence of commuting from the district which impacts on the local labour market and levels of pay, particularly for jobs that require skills that are in relatively short supply.

There are some long standing recruitment difficulties and retention issues in key skill areas and the Council is making every effort to manage skill shortages with apprenticeships, including higher level apprenticeships, introducing a new recruitment strategy and streamlined processes, working with Public Practice to encourage planners, designers working in the private sector to work in the public sector.

The situation is not static and is capable of changing very rapidly, but the Council continually considers steps regarding pay and allowances that are designed to assist with recruitment and retention.

This Statement reflects the Council's current pay, pension and leave policies and strategies which will be amended over time to deal with changing circumstances. These documents play an important role in attracting and retaining the best people to the Council.

All decisions on pay and reward for Chief Officers will comply with the Council's current Pay Policy Statement.

Legislation

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh Councils to produce a Pay Policy Statement for 2012/2013 and for each financial year thereafter.

The Council's Pay Policy Statement;

- Must be approved formally by the Council;
- Must be approved each year;
- May be amended during the course of the financial year; and
- Must be published on the Council's website.

The Pay Policy Statement must include;

- The level and elements of remuneration for each of the Chief Officers;
- The remuneration of its lowest paid employees (together with its definition of 'lowest paid employees' and the Council's reasons for adopting that definition);
- The relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and other Officers; and
- Other aspects of Chief Officers' remuneration; remuneration on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration, use of performance-related pay and bonuses, termination payments and transparency.

Remuneration is defined widely, to include not just pay but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases/enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments.

All salaries and calculations are based on full time equivalent (fte).

Publication of the Pay Policy Statement

The Policy has been made available on the Council's website.

Effect of this Policy Statement

Nothing in this Policy Statement enables unilateral changes to employee's terms and conditions. Changes to terms and conditions of employment must follow consultation and negotiation with individuals and recognised trade unions as set out in other agreements and in line with legislation. At the time of approving of this Statement by full Council, a consultation process to change pay and allowances arrangements is ongoing.

Pay Arrangements

During 2018/19 negotiations took place with the recognised trade unions to move pay away from National Conditions to local arrangements.

The outcome of these negotiations resulted in a Collective Agreement and local pay arrangements were implemented with effect from 1 October 2019. The local pay scales can be found at Appendix 1 (pay is at 1 April 2020). At this point, Inner Fringe London Allowance was incorporated into salary scales, and no longer forms part of separate pay bargaining.

Grades no longer contain incremental points, and employees are paid at a spot salary within the grade range. Incremental progression, therefore, no longer applies but progression within grade can be applied in accordance with pay policy. Placement within the respective Grade Zones is also in accordance with pay policy.

Grades for roles will continue to be determined by the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme implemented through our Job Family Framework.

Pay Awards

For the future, Epping Forest salary ranges will be benchmarked against the Public & Not for Profit Market, and NJC pay awards will no longer apply, although the Council has agreed that annual pay awards will be no less than the NJC Award.

The Council will consider pay awards annually, and any award agreed will be applied at 1 April.

Remuneration of Chief Officers

The Council will not agree any pay arrangement which does not reflect the correct employment and/or tax/NI status of a Chief Officer or employee.

It will be the responsibility of Council to agree the initial salaries for Chief Officers following external advice/evaluation/benchmarking. At Epping, Chief Officers are determined as the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Chief Operating Officer.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is paid a spot salary of £143,000 which includes compensation for all other allowances that might normally apply (i.e. evening meeting payments). The Chief Executive may also benefit from a performance payment of up to £5,000 (non-consolidated) if targets and objectives, set by the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny and Committee, together with an independent facilitator, are met. For future years, any performance payment will be unconsolidated unless a further review of base salary is undertaken.

The Chief Executive is also the Council's Head of Paid Service and the Returning Officer (for which additional fees are paid).

Strategic Directors

In January 2020, Cabinet agreed a new organisation structure which permanently established 2 Strategic Director roles and a role of Chief Operating Officer, all at a spot salary of £115,000 together with the opportunity of flexibility of benefits.

Termination Payments

On ceasing to be employed by the Council, individuals will only receive compensation:

- in circumstances that are relevant (e.g. redundancy), and
- in accordance with our published Pension Policy on how we exercise the various employer discretions provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), and/or that complies with the specific term(s) of a compromise agreement.

All employees with contracts of 3 months or more are automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which is administered by Essex County Council. Payments on grounds of Redundancy are covered by the Council's Redundancy and Efficiency Payments Policy.

All employees are treated in the same way with regard to the calculation of severance payments in situations of redundancy.

Statutory Roles

The statutory roles of Monitoring Officer and 'Section 151' Officer will be carried out by the Head of Legal and the Strategic Director. These positions do not need to be held by Chief Officers. The Monitoring Officer role will receive an additional £5,000 supplement for these statutory responsibilities. The 'Section 151' Officer has this in their base salary.

Definition of Lowest Paid Employees

For the purpose of this Policy Statement, employees on grade A are defined as our lowest-paid employees.

At 1 April 2020, the fte annual value of the minimum of the Growth Zone of Grade A was £18,740.

The exceptions to the lowest grade are Apprentices who are paid £160 per week. When apprentices move into year 2 of their placement, they receive the minimum wage for their age.

Pay Multiples

The Hutton Review raised concerns about multiples in the order of 20 or higher between the lowest and the highest paid employees in local authorities. However the Interim Report noted that the most top to bottom pay multiples in the public sector are in the region of 8:1 to 12:1. The Council is therefore content that having due regard for the level of responsibilities and personal accountability between the lowest and highest paid roles, the current multiple of 7.6 seems to be both justifiable and equitable.

The council does not set the remuneration of any individual or group of posts by reference to a multiple. However, as suggested by the Hutton Review the Council will monitor multiples over time to ensure they are appropriate and fair and will explain significant changes in pay multiples. The multiples are as following;

Role	2021/2022	
	Multiple	Salary
Chief Executive compared to lowest salary	x 7.6	£143,000
Strategic Directors compared to lowest salary	x 6.1	£115,000
Average salary compared to Chief Executive	x 3.9	£36,338
Average salary compared to lowest salary	x 1.9	£36,338

- The average salary is based on fte and has not been pro-rata'd for part-time employees
- The lowest fte salary in the Council is £18,740 in 2020/2021

Other Payments

Market Supplements may be paid in accordance with the Council's Policy for Payment of Market Supplements (although where necessary to secure or retain the employment of essential staff, other means may be applied to achieve the same outcome).

Honorarium or ex-gratia payments will be paid in accordance with our Additional Payments Policy.

The Council does not currently apply performance related pay or bonuses (except for in the case of the Chief Executive), but this may change generally at a future date, and may be applied as part of a personal contract of employment if required to secure the employment and retention of essential employees. Under local pay arrangements, the Council may consider the award of a Council wide or Team bonus at any point paid, on the basis of agreed

targets/outputs. Such bonus will take the form of an unconsolidated payment and will not affect substantive pay.

These policies are applied consistently to all employees.

APPENDIX 1

Grade	Growth Zone £	Salary for Role £	Exception Zone £
A	18,740 – 19,100	19,241	19,301 – 19,500
B	19,501 – 19,942	20,089	20,301 – 20,500
C	20,600 – 21,624	21,784	21,801 – 22,300
D	22,400 – 24,353	24,533	24,751 – 25,500
E	25,700 – 28,203	28,411	28,801 – 29,500
F	29,700 – 32,258	32,496	32,951 – 33,400
G	33,500 – 37,128	37,402	37,801 – 38,400
H	38,500 – 42,126	42,437	42,601 – 43,300
I	43,600 – 47,226	47,574	47,824 – 50,000
J	50,300 – 54,060	54,459	54,959 – 56,200
K	57,500 – 60,818	61,266	61,501 – 63,000

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL - REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES SCHEME

The Epping Forest District Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 1990 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001, hereby makes the following scheme:

1. Scheme

- 1.1 This scheme may be cited as the Epping Forest District Council Members' Allowance Scheme and shall have effect for the period from 25 May 2021 to 24 May 2022.

2. Definition

- 2.1 In this scheme:

"business mileage" means mileage incurred for journeys by Councillors between their homes and business venues or between the Civic Offices, Epping and business venues;

"Councillor" means a member of the Epping Forest District Council who is a Councillor;

"home to office mileage" means mileage incurred for journey by Councillors between their homes and the Civic Offices in Epping;

"independent person" means: (a) a member of the Standards Committee or the Remuneration Panel who is not an elected councillor; or (b) a co-opted member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Audit and Governance Committee who is not an elected councillor; and

"year" means the period ending with 23 May 2020.

3. Basic Allowance

- 3.1 Subject to Paragraph 7, £4,300 shall be paid to each Councillor. Payments are subject to deductions for tax and national insurance dependant on the circumstances of individual councillors.

4. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 4.1 For each year a special responsibility allowance shall be paid to those councillors who hold the special responsibilities in relation to the allowances specified in Schedule 1 to this scheme. Special responsibility allowances shall be calculated as multipliers of the Basic Allowance. There is no restriction on the number of separate SRA's which are payable to an individual member.
- 4.2 Subject to Paragraph 7, the amount of each allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in Schedule 1 for the year.
- 4.3 The Council has decided not to implement payment of the full Special Responsibility Allowance amounts and to restrict these to a percentage of each allowance as set out in an annual statement of implementation.

5. Travelling and Subsistence (including Cycle Allowance)

- 5.1 These expenses may be claimed by members of the Council in connection with the carrying out of approved duties specified in Schedules 2, 3 and 4 of this scheme.
- 5.2 Payments may be claimed up to the maximum casual user rate set for officers of the Council as adjusted annually by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (travel expenses) and the East of England Regional Assembly (subsistence expenses).
- 5.3 Payment of home to office car mileage will be subject to deduction of tax and national insurance contributions, dependant on the circumstances of individual councillors. Business mileage incurred by councillors will not be subject to such deductions if the mileage rate claimed does not exceed 45 pence per mile.
- 5.4 Claims for the payment of business and/or home to office mileage may be made by members that have been driven to the approved duty giving rise to the claim, other than by way of taxi or other form of public transport, subject to the Council's usual checks and controls and the provision of appropriate VAT receipts.

6. Child Care and Dependant Carers' Allowances

- 6.1 The maximum rate for this allowance shall be set at a rate equivalent to the current National Living Wage.
- 6.2 A member of the Council or an independent person shall be eligible to claim up to four hours of the allowance for the performance of approved duties under this scheme and for the purpose of contributing to the cost of providing personal care to immediate dependants who are in need of care and supervision.
- 6.3 The rate applicable shall be subject to automatic increases on an annual basis in line with uprating of the National Living Wage.
- 6.4 The allowance is not payable in respect of carers who are members of the member's immediate and close family i.e. parents, children, spouses, co-habitees or members of the same household as the member.
- 6.5 All claims shall be subject to Audit checks and no claim in excess of the maximum level will be payable, whatever the circumstances.

7. Renunciation

- 7.1 A councillor or independent person may by notice in writing given to the Service Manager (Governance), elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

8. Part-year Entitlements

- 8.1 The provisions of this paragraph shall have the effect of regulating the entitlements of a councillor to basic and special responsibility allowances where, in the course of a year, this scheme is amended or that councillor becomes, or ceases to be, a councillor, or accepts or relinquishes a special responsibility in respect of which a special responsibility allowance is payable.

- 8.2 If an amendment to this scheme changes and the amount to which a councillor is entitled by way of a basic allowance or a special responsibility allowance, then in relation to each of the periods:
- (a) beginning with the year and ending with the day before that on which the first amendment in that year takes effect; or
 - (b) beginning with the day on which an amendment takes effect and ending with the day before that on which the next amendment takes effect, or (if none) with the end of the year; and
 - (c) the entitlement to such an allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the amount of the allowance under this scheme as it has effect during the relevant period as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of the days in the period bears to the number of days in the year.
- 8.3 Where the term of office of a councillor begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, the entitlement of that councillor to a basic allowance shall be to the payment to such part of the basic allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office subsists bears to the number of days in that year.
- 8.4 Where this scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2), and the term of office of a councillor does not subsist throughout the period mentioned in such-paragraph (2)(a), the entitlement of any such councillor to a basic allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the basic allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub-paragraph) as bears to the whole of the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office as a councillor subsists bears to the number of days in that period.
- 8.5 Where a councillor has during part of, but not throughout a year such special responsibilities as entitle him or her to a special responsibility allowance, that councillor's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of that allowance as bears to the whole of the same proportion as the number of days during which he/she has such special responsibilities, bears to the number of days in that year.
- 8.6 Where this scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2), and a councillor has during part, but does not have throughout the whole, of any period mentioned in sub-paragraph (2)(a) of that paragraph any such special responsibilities as entitle him or her to a special responsibility allowance, that councillor's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub-paragraph) as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days in that period during which he or she has such special responsibilities bears to the number of days in that period.

9. Claims and Payments

- 9.1 Payments shall be made in respect of basic and special responsibility allowances, subject to sub-paragraph (2), in instalments of one quarter of the amount specified in this scheme.
- 9.2 Where a payment of one-quarter of the amount specified in this scheme in respect of a basic allowance or a special responsibility allowance would result in the councillor receiving more than the amount to which by virtue of paragraph 8(1), he or she is

entitled, the payment shall be restricted to such amount as will ensure that no more is paid than the amount to which he or she is entitled.

- 9.3 Claims must be made within a period of one year of the duty being carried out. Payments after that period will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

10. Uprating for Inflation

- 10.1 There will be no inflationary adjustment to the allowances set out in this scheme, except those relating to travel and subsistence.

11. Co-optees' Allowance

- 11.1 Co-optees' allowance will be payable to independent persons as set out in Schedule 5 to this scheme.

12. Withholding/Recovery of Payments

- 12.1 Where any councillor or independent member has already received a payment in respect of any period during which they have been:

- (a) ceased to be a member of the Authority; or
- (b) not entitled in any other way to receive the allowance in respect of that period, the Council may require that such part of the allowance as relates to the period in question shall be repaid to the Authority.

13. Pensionable Status

- 13.1 Remuneration payable to councillors of Epping Forest District Council under this scheme shall only be entitled to pensionable status in accordance with a scheme made under Section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972, if the member opted in to the Essex Superannuation Scheme before 1 April 2014.

- 13.2 For the purposes of a Paragraph 13.1 above basic allowance and special responsibility allowance will be treated as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable in accordance with a scheme under that Act.

- 13.3 The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 removed access to the LGPS for Councillors from 1 April 2014, with the exception of those who were members of the Scheme on 31 March 2014, who retain access to the LGPS up to the end of their current term of office only (or to age 75 if earlier).

14. Further Guidance

- 14.1 Further guidance on this scheme can be found in Appendix 1.

SCHEDULE 1

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

1. The following are specified as the special responsibilities in respect of which special responsibility allowances are payable and the amounts of those allowances.

DUTY	ANNUAL TOTAL AMOUNT OF SRA
Chairman of the Council	£10,750.00
Vice-Chairman of the Council	
Leader of the Council	£10,750.00
Cabinet Members	£6,450.00 (each)
Chairman of the District Development Management Committee	£3,225.00
Chairmen of the Area Plans Sub-Committees	£3,225.00 (each)
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£4,300.00
Chairman of the Licensing Committee	£500.00
Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committees	£2,225.00 (allocated according to the number of meetings chaired each year)
Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee	£2,150.00
Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees	£2,150.00 (each)
Chairman of the Standards Committee	£110.00 per meeting held each year
Chairman of the Constitution Working Group	£500.00

SCHEDULE 2

APPROVED DUTIES

1. The following are specified as an approved duty for the purpose of the payment of travelling and subsistence expenses, attendance at any of the following:
 - (a) a meeting of the authority, the Cabinet, a Cabinet Committee, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Panels, the Standards Committee and its Sub-Committees, or as a member of any other Committee or sub-committee, panel, working group, special committee or board of the authority;
 - (b) any other meeting held by the authority provided that:
 - where the authority is divided into two or more political groups, it is a meeting to which members of at least two such groups have been invited; or
 - if the authority is not so divided, it is a meeting to which at least two members of the authority have been invited;
 - (c) duties relating to the supervision of tender opening as required by the Council's Procurement Rules;
 - (d) attendance as representative of the Council at any approved conference or meeting of the outside organisations set out in Schedules 3 and 4;
 - (e) attendance at any meeting or other official function at the request of the Chief Executive, the Strategic Directors or a Service Director, including meetings between group representatives for a particular Committee and officers;
 - (f) any other duty approved by the Council or the Cabinet or any other committee, sub-committee, special committee or Board or Panel or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of functions or the body, or of any of its committees or sub-committees;
 - (g) attendance by a councillor at a meeting of which he or she is not a member for the purpose of explaining a motion referred from the Council;
 - (h) attendance as a councillor at the invitation of the Local Government Ombudsman for the purpose of investigating a complaint against this Council of maladministration;
 - (i) attendance as an appointed representative of Epping Forest District Council at any meeting of Essex County Council or any of its committees or sub-committees for the purpose of formal consultations on any matter affecting the powers or duties of this Council or the district or any part thereof;
 - (j) attendance on behalf of the Council or the Cabinet or as a Chairman on behalf of a Committee at an official function;
 - (k) attendance at seminars and training courses arranged by the authority;
 - (l) consultation meetings arranged by the authority where the member's attendance is required or where the business directly affects the member's ward;

- (m) site visits arranged by Area Plans Sub-Committees or the District Development Management Committee;
 - (n) informal site visits by individual councillors in respect of their duties as members of an Area Plans Sub-Committee;
 - (o) attendance at a meeting concerning joint working or partnership arrangements to represent the Council's interests; and
 - (p) attendance at any civic event to which the Chairman or Vice-Chairman is attending in that capacity (or representative) for which Council funded transport is not provided.
2. There is specified as an approved duty for the purpose of paying travelling and subsistence expenses attendance at any of the outside organisations shown in Schedule 4.
 3. Attendance by members of the Council at meetings of outside organisations not shown in Schedule 4 shall NOT qualify for payment of travelling and subsistence expenses.

SCHEDULE 3

CONFERENCE AND MEETINGS

Conference and meetings organised by any person or body who is not doing so by way of trade nor whose objects are wholly or partly political, attendance at which is authorised by or on behalf of the authority and which does not involve an absence overnight from the councillor's normal place of residence.	Appropriate subsistence and travelling expenses (second class return rail fare or car mileage at the appropriate rates whichever is the less if travel outside the Epping Forest District is required).
Conferences and meetings organised by any person or body who is not doing so by way of trade, nor whose objects are wholly or partly political, attendance at which is authorised by or on behalf of the authority and which involves an absence from the councillor's normal place of residence of one or more nights.	Appropriate subsistence and travelling expenses (second class return rail fare or car mileage at the appropriate rate whichever is the less if travelling outside the Epping Forest District is required).

SCHEDULE 4

OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Attendance as appointed representative of the Council on any outside organisations, such attendances being deemed approved duty for the purpose of paying subsistence and travelling expenses.

SCHEDULE 5

CO-OPTEES' ALLOWANCE

Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	£500.00 per annum
Independent Members of the Remuneration Panel and Parish Remuneration Panel	£250.00 per annum
Co-opted members of the Audit and Governance Committee	£500.00 per annum
Co-opted independent members of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£500.00 per annum

MEMBER REMUNERATION SCHEME

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
GUIDANCE NOTE ON ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES FOR MEMBERS**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Councillor is eligible for the payment of attendance allowances and for reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses in respect of approved duties carried out on behalf of the Council. An approved duty is one which has been authorised by or on behalf of the Council in advance.
- 1.2 The Council has a formal scheme for allowances which is updated from time to time. A copy of the scheme is set out in the Constitution. This note is of a more informal nature and is designed to assist members in dealing with their claims and explaining the arrangements to the public.

2. BASIC ALLOWANCE

- 2.1 This is a flat rate allowance payable to all members of the Council. This annual amount is paid in quarterly instalments. Members do not have to claim this amount. The full amount of the Basic Allowance is £4,300.00 per member, per annum.
- 2.2 The Council requires each of its elected councillors to be registered as a data controller in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018. Although members are responsible for their individual compliance with the data protection principles of the General Data Protection Regulation, the Council coordinates the registration (and annual renewal) process on behalf of members and an amount of £40.00 is therefore withheld from the Basic Allowance each year to meet the registration fee imposed by the Information Commissioner.

3. SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE

- 3.1 This is a special allowance payable to the Leader, Cabinet members and certain Chairmen. It is designed to reflect the additional responsibilities of these office holders. This amount is paid in quarterly instalments during the year and does not have to be claimed.
- 3.2 The Special Responsibility Allowance applicable to the chairmen of the Standards Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committees is applied on a 'per-meeting' basis and is paid in a single instalment at year-end.
- 3.3 The Council has decided not to implement payment of the full Special Responsibility Allowance amounts and to restrict these to a percentage of each allowance set out in the Scheme.

4. TRAVEL EXPENSES

- 4.1 Members may re-claim reasonable travel expenses (including public transport tickets, taxi fares, parking costs where appropriate subject to submission of evidence of expenditure) in respect of approved duties as defined in the scheme (Schedule 2).

Car Travel

- 4.2 The normal rates for car travel are the same as the higher rates paid to officers classed as casual users. Claims must be fixed on the rates applicable at the time of the journey. These rates are set out on the claim form and are reviewed annually.

Shortest Distance

- 4.3 Claims for car travel should be by reference to the shortest distance from home to the Council offices or other venue for the approved duty concerned. No claim for additional expenses will be entertained unless there is a valid reason for incurring the additional mileage.

Travel Direct from Place of Employment etc

- 4.4 For claims involving direct travel from a Councillor's place of employment (or other departure point) for an approved duty, the distance claims shall be limited to the home to meeting venue element of the journey. All such claims must be endorsed "CLAIM LIMITED" on the form.

Travel outside the District – Limit on Amount Claimable

- 4.5 For journeys to approved meetings outside the District or by members resident outside the district, claims irrespective of mode of travel must not exceed the lower of:
- (a) second class return rail fare plus underground and other fares from station to destination at each end of the journey; or
 - (b) the appropriate car mileage.
- 4.6 This is subject to consideration of any special circumstances as set out in 4.7 below.

Travel over Long Distances – Special Circumstances

- 4.7 If, for any reason, a councillor undertakes travel over long distances or from outside the District, members are advised to contact the Service Manager (Governance) in advance for advice on what would constitute a reasonable claim in the circumstances.

Use of Public Transport within Epping Forest District

- 4.8 The rate for travel by public transport must not exceed the ordinary fare (or any available cheap fare). A member may not claim travelling expenses in respect of a single duty from more than one body. In all such claims evidence of expenditure (i.e. tickets or other receipts) MUST be provided. No claim will be allowed without such evidence.

Cycle Allowance

- 4.9 This allowance is payable at the highest of the higher casual rates paid to officers classed as casual users.

Child and Dependant Carer's Allowance

- 4.10 This allowance may be claimed at a rate equivalent to the current rate for the National Living Wage. Certain conditions are set out in the Scheme.

5. SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES

- 5.1 Subsistence expenses (covering refreshments and meals etc paid for by a member) are claimable by councillor in respect of making attendances connected with approved duties on behalf of the Council. The rates for such expenses are set out (by reference to meal time and periods of absence) on the reverse of the form which is supplied to members on a quarterly basis. These rates may not be exceeded. Periods of absence will be calculated on the basis of departure from home or place of work if it is not possible to return home in the time available.
- 5.2 All claims for subsistence must be accompanied by receipts in respect of meals etc as evidence of expenditure actually having been incurred. No claims will be allowed in the absence of such evidence.
- 5.3 Special arrangements exist in respect of subsistence expenses in respect of duties involving an absence overnight from a councillor's normal place of residence. These are outlined under Section 7 relating to conferences.
- 5.4 A councillor may not claim subsistence expenses in respect of a single duty from more than one body.

6. CONFERENCES

- 6.1 Attendance at conferences and the payment of allowances and expenses are subject to prior approval by the Council, Cabinet, appropriate committee, Leader or Deputy Leader in all cases. **Attendance at conferences and the payment of allowances and expenses may also be subject to prior approval by the chairman of the appropriate committee.**
- 6.2 All conferences deemed to be approved duties shall, in accordance with statutory requirements, be relevant to the District and not wholly or partly commercial or political in their objectives.

Allowances for Attendance at Conferences (Involving an Absence from Home)

(a) Subsistence - Nights Away from Home

- 6.3 For conferences involving one or more night's absence, claims can be made for reasonable day or overnight expenses that are necessarily and exclusively incurred in the attendance as an authorised representative of the Council at a meeting, conference or seminar that it held outside of the Epping Forest District.

(b) Claims for Subsistence

- 6.4 These claims should cover such items as hotel bills, refreshments, meals (other than free meals which should be discounted) and similar items. No claims will be allowed unless evidence is provided of all expenditure being claimed. All relevant bills and receipts should be forwarded to the Service Manager (Governance) with claims.

Travel Claims

- 6.5 The guidance outlined under paragraph 4.5 will apply to all conferences.

7. TAXATION AND NATIONAL INSURANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Details of the tax and national insurance implications of allowance payments and expenses claimed are available through Democratic Services. In such matters, members are advised to seek advice from their tax office in the event of any concerns.
- 7.2 Supplementary Note Regarding Treatment of Claims for Travel Expenses by Car for Tax and National Insurance Purposes.

(a) Travel by Car – Councillors’ Homes to Civic Offices Expenses (“Home to Office Mileage”)

- 7.3 Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) deems a councillor’s workplace for the purposes of their role as an elected representative to be the Civic Offices, Epping. From April 2016, ‘Home to Office Mileage’ is no longer subject to tax and national insurance deductions, provided that the distance between a councillor’s home and the Civic Offices is no more than 20 miles.
- 7.4 If the upper rate of mileage is also claimed (any amount above 45p per mile) this part of the payment will be treated as a taxable benefit and national insurance will be deducted. A petrol/diesel VAT receipt will be required to be submitted with all claims before payment can be made, which must predate the first date of mileage on the submitted claim. The receipt must also be dated within a reasonable timeframe of the first journey for which a claim is made.

(b) Travel by Car – Councillors’ Homes to Other Venues or Civic Offices to Other Venues for the Purposes of Council Business (“Business Mileage”)

- 7.5 HMRC has determined that such travel shall not be subject to tax or national insurance deductions except where the rate of reimbursement exceeds 45 pence per mile. Travel to any meetings of the Council or its subordinate bodies which are held at a location other than the Civic Offices is deemed to be business mileage.

(c) Second Journeys

- 7.6 Second journeys will be subject to taxation and National Insurance deductions depending on whether the journey constitutes home to office or business mileage.

8. ALTERATION OF CLAIMS

- 8.1 All claim forms submitted by members are checked for accuracy. The Democratic Services Manager is authorised to reduce incorrect claims in the following circumstances:

- (a) where a member does not attend at a claimed meeting;
- (b) where a claimed meeting is not approved;
- (c) where an incorrect amount of allowance is claimed; and
- (d) where a correct date has not been claimed.

- 8.2 Any changes under paragraph 8.1 will be notified to members after the claim form has been processed. Any other problems with members' claims will be referred back for the claimant and processing of the claim will not take place until the query has been clarified.

9. INTERPRETATION

- 9.1 These guidelines are subject to the overall interpretation of the Chief Executive as to what constitutes a reasonable claim in any individual circumstances.

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Prepared/Revised	Written by	Agreed/Authorised	Details of Change(s)
November 2015	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (17/11/15) Council (15/12/15)	Review of Scheme for 2016/17 municipal year
October 2016	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (28/9/16) Council (20/12/16)	Review of Scheme for 2017/18 municipal year
November 2017	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (30/10/17) Council (21/12/17)	Review of Scheme for 2018/19 municipal year
November 2018	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (29/11/18) Council (20/12/18)	Review of Scheme for 2019/20 municipal year
November 2019	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (31/10/19) Council (17/12/19)	Review of Scheme for 2020/21 municipal year
January 2021	G. Woodhall (Team Manager – Democratic & Electoral Services)	Remuneration Panel (27-Jan-21) Council (25-Feb-21)	Review of Scheme for 2021/22 municipal year

This page is intentionally left blank

SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES - STATEMENT CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION 2021/22

**The following scheme has been agreed for the period
from 25 May 2021 to 24 May 2022**

The Council decided at its meeting on 25 February 2021 to implement the amount of Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees Allowances provided in the scheme as set out below:

BASIC ALLOWANCE	ANNUAL BASIC ALLOWANCE	IMPLEMENTATION OF BASIC ALLOWANCE
All Councillors	£4,300.00	£4,300.00 (100%)

The amounts set out below show the amounts of Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) payable during the year:

DUTY	ANNUAL SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE	IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE
Chairman of the Council	£10,750.00 (total)	£8,600.00 (80%)
Vice-Chairman of the Council		£2,150.00 (20%)
Leader of the Council	£10,750.00	£7,875.00 (73%)
Cabinet members	£6,450.00 (each)	£6,300.00 (98%)
Chairman of the District Development Management Committee	£3,225.00	£2,362.00 (73%)
Chairmen of the Area Plans Sub-Committees	£3,225.00	£2,362.00 (73%)
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£4,300.00	£3,150.00 (73%)

Chairman of the Licensing Committee	£500.00	£500.00
Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committees	£2,725.00 (allocated according to the number of meetings each year)	£1,862.00 (allocated according to the number of meetings each year) (73%)
Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee	£2,150.00	£2,150.00
Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees	£2,150.00	£2,150.00 (each)
Chairman of the Standards Committee	£110.00 (per meeting)	£110.00 (per meeting)
Chairman of the Constitution Working Group	£500.00	£500.00

The amounts payable during the year for independent and co-opted members are:

Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	£500.00
Independent Members of the Remuneration Panel and Parish Remuneration Panel	£250.00
Co-opted members of the Audit and Governance Committee	£500.00
Co-opted independent members of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£500.00

A copy of the full scheme is available on request from Democratic Services, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, CM16 4BZ.

Appendix A

Town, Parish & Local Council Tax 2021/22

Town/Parish	2021/22				
	Tax Base	Town/Parish Precept (£'s)	Parish Band D Charge (£'s)	District Band D Charge (£'s)	Local Council Tax Band D Charge (£'s)
Abbess, Berners and Beauchamp Roding	232.2	5,610	24.16	152.46	176.62
Buckhurst Hill	5,182.1	356,979	68.89	152.46	221.35
Chigwell	6,217.6	290,801	46.77	152.46	199.23
Epping Town	5,238.2	517,329	98.76	152.46	251.22
Epping Upland	404.7	16,580	40.97	152.46	193.43
Fyfield	402.6	13,534	33.62	152.46	186.08
High Ongar	578.5	10,662	18.43	152.46	170.89
Lambourne	894.0	39,480	44.16	152.46	196.62
Loughton Town	12,534.1	782,675	62.44	152.46	214.90
Matching	453.1	17,048	37.63	152.46	190.09
Moreton, Bobbingworth and the Lavers	583.0	17,424	29.89	152.46	182.35
Nazeing	2,095.9	90,000	42.94	152.46	195.40
North Weald Bassett	2,565.2	220,376	85.91	152.46	238.37
Ongar Town	2,797.6	290,193	103.73	152.46	256.19
Roydon	1,388.5	34,168	24.61	152.46	177.07
Sheering	1,339.4	43,000	32.10	152.46	184.56
Stanford Rivers	362.5	20,978	57.87	152.46	210.33
Stapleford Abbots	559.8	11,204	20.01	152.46	172.47
Stapleford Tawney	82.7	1,537	18.57	152.46	171.03
Theydon Bois	1,981.0	120,842	61.00	152.46	213.46
Theydon Garnon	89.5	1,000	11.18	152.46	163.64
Theydon Mount	116.0	1,975	17.03	152.46	169.49
Waltham Abbey Town	7,672.4	855,395	111.49	152.46	263.95
Willingale	248.0	5,285	21.31	152.46	173.77
Town, Parish and Local Council Tax Totals	54,018.7	3,764,075	69.68	152.46	222.14

This page is intentionally left blank