

# EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 23 July 2024, 7.00 pm - 7.55 pm

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

**Members Present:** Councillors L Burrows (Chairman), L Mead (Vice-Chairman), C Amos, A Ardakani, R Balcombe, E Barnard, N Bedford, T Bromwich, R Brookes, B Cohen, T Cornish, B Church, M Dadd, M George, S Heather, H Kauffman, W Kauffman, P Keska, A Lion, M Markham, C McCann, J McIvor, L Morgan, R Morgan, S Murray, C Nweke, J Parsons, S Patel, C C Pond, S Rackham, K Rizvi, D Stocker, D Sunger, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and G Wiskin

**Members Present (Virtually):** None.

**Apologies:** Councillor(s) I Allgood, R Baldwin, R Bassett, R Chahal Holden, I Hadley, S Jones, J Lea, J Lucas, T Matthews, M Morris, M Owen, R Pugsley, R Sharif, K Williamson and S Yerrell.

**Officers In Attendance:** Andrew Small (Strategic Director, Corporate and Section 151 Officer), Gary Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services), Natalie Cole (Corporate Communications Officer) and Louise Baker (Internal Communications Assistant)

**Officers In Attendance (Virtually):** Jennifer Gould (Strategic Director and Chief Operating Officer) and Therese Larsen (Democratic Services Officer)

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**A [RECORDING OF THIS MEETING](#) IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING**

## **13 WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Democratic 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.

## **14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(a) During item 9 – Questions by Members without Notice – and pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Cllr C Whitbread declared a personal interest by virtue of being a Board Member of Terra Verde Services in his role as Leader of the Council. The Councillor had determined that his interest was non-pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the item.

## **15 MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED:**

(1) That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 April 2024 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record; and

- (2) That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 May 2024 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## **16 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

The Chairman announced that he had attended a number of major events in the District since the last Council meeting, including Ride London, the D-Day fly-in at North Weald Airfield, the launch of the Epping Forest Community Lottery, and the launch of the new Herts/Essex Air Ambulance.

The Chairman stated that it was his sad duty to inform the Council of the passing of Jack Petchey CBE last month. Mr Petchey had set up a foundation to inspire and motivate young people, and many young people within the District and Youth Councillors had received Jack Petchey awards.

Finally, the Chairman informed the Council that the Civic Carol Service would be held on Friday 13 December 2024 at St Mary's Church in Theydon Bois; and the Civic Awards Night would be held on Friday 14 March 2025 at the Marriot Hotel in Waltham Abbey.

## **17 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

The Council noted that no public questions had been received for consideration at the meeting.

## **18 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE**

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

## **19 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 the Council**

The Leader of the Council, Cllr C Whitbread, reported that he had met with numerous local councils over the past fortnight to discuss various issues, including Masterplans. The Cabinet's plans for the year ahead had been set out at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 4 June 2024, at which the 'Fit for the Future' programme and the importance of shared working with other local authorities – particularly with the North Essex Councils – had been highlighted.

The Leader had also attended an Essex Leaders meeting at which many issues had been discussed, including the new Government's drive for devolution, which would become increasingly important and bring real benefits to the residents of Epping Forest as power was gained over issues such as transport. Shared Services would also become more important, and this Council was leading the way with its collaboration with Colchester City and Braintree District Councils.

The Leader had also attended a meeting at North Weald Airfield to discuss the different options for the Airfield's future, and highlighted some of the improvements being brought about across the District through Safer Streets funding.

The report of the Leader of the Council was noted.

The Leader also reported on some outstanding nominations for his Group from the Annual Council meeting.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That Cllr D Stocker be appointed to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as a replacement for Cllr D Sunger for the remainder of the municipal year; and
- (2) That Cllr D Sunger and Cllr S Heather be appointed to the Audit & Governance Committee.

**(b) Housing & HGGT Portfolio Holder**

The Portfolio Holder updated the Council on the meeting of the HGGT Joint Committee, which had taken place the previous evening at Harlow District Council.

The report of the Housing & HGGT Portfolio Holder was noted.

**(c) Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

The report of the Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder was noted.

**(d) Shaping Our District Portfolio Holder**

The report of the Shaping Our District Portfolio Holder was noted.

**(e) Commercial & Estates Portfolio Holder**

The report of the Commercial & Estates Portfolio Holder was noted.

**(f) Transformation Portfolio Holder**

The report of the Transformation Portfolio Holder was noted.

**(g) Contracts Delivery Portfolio Holder**

The report of the Contracts Delivery Portfolio Holder was noted.

**(h) Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder**

The report of the Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder was noted.

**(i) Regulatory, Technical & Community Safety Services Portfolio Holder**

The report of the Regulatory, Technical & Community Safety Services Portfolio Holder was noted.

**20 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**

<b>Question asked by:</b>	<b>Question asked to:</b>	<b>Subject of the Question:</b>
Cllr S Murray	Regulatory, Technical & Community Safety Services Portfolio Holder, Cllr P	Fly-tipping over the last three months and the cost of removal.

	Keska	
Cllr D Sunger	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr H Whitbread	The new playground in Bumbles Green funded by the Rural Prosperity Fund.
Cllr C Amos	Contracts Delivery Portfolio Holder, Cllr R Balcombe	With the change of contract for Waste Management, the viability of the new vehicles being electric.
Cllr M Markham	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr H Whitbread	Initiatives to support women in business.
Cllr C C Pond	Contracts Delivery Portfolio Holder, Cllr R Balcombe	An update on how the transition of the Waste Management contract was progressing and the replenishment of recycling sack supplies.
Cllr D Stocker	Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, Cllr K Rizvi	The improvements brought about by Safer Streets funding in Ninefields, WA and the plans for the Oakwood Hill estate.
Cllr E Barnard	Housing & HGGT Portfolio Holder, Cllr N Bedford	The process for approval of the Epping Town Neighbourhood Plan.
Cllr J H Whitehouse	Leader of the Council, Cllr C Whitbread	The potential widening of the remit of the quarterly meetings with TfL to include issues raised by Members.
Cllr J M Whitehouse	Regulatory, Technical & Community Safety Services Portfolio Holder, Cllr P Keska	Understanding of the decision to re-prioritise or re-purpose the spending of Disabled Facilities Grants.

## 21 REPORT OF THE CABINET - NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD NEW CONTROL TOWER / FIRE STATION DEVELOPMENT & POST GOOGLE LAND SALE OBLIGATIONS

The Leader of the Council, Cllr C Whitbread, presented a report from the Cabinet requesting two variations to the Council's Capital Programme, in relation to the development of a new Control Tower and Fire Station at North Weald Airfield, and obligations arising from the sale of land at North Weald Airfield within the Master Plan employment area to the technology company Google.

### **Resolved:**

- (1) That a variation to the Capital Programme in the sum of £300,000 be approved for the funding of associated equipment required for the new Control Tower Building at North Weald Airfield, including that for the Visual Control Room; and
- (2) That a variation to the Capital Programme in the sum of £554,916 be approved for the management and delivery of obligatory capital works arising from the conditions within the sale of land within the North Weald Airfield Master Plan employment area, including the adaptation of a new interim Airfield access point and enabling works associated with the electrical power supply.

**22 MOTIONS**

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

**23 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

In the absence of the Chairman who had given his apologies for the meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Cllr C McCann - provided an update.

Cllr C McCann detailed the issues considered at the previous meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2024, which included the approval of the Scrutiny Work Programmes for the forthcoming municipal year. The next meeting would take place on 30 July 2024, and Cllr C McCann highlighted the issues to be considered over the course of the year. In addition, Officers were working to get agreement from Transport for London (TfL) to attend a dedicated Scrutiny meeting in the near future.

Cllr S Murray suggested that Members should give TfL advance notice of any issues or questions that they had so that responses could be prepared for the meeting. Cllr C McCann agreed that this would be a very sensible approach as the issues with TfL were felt across the District.

The Council noted the report from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

**24 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS & EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

The Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr H Whitbread, informed the Council that the Museum was now a fully vested Trust with a number of active Trustees. Currently, there was a 'Towns through Time' exhibition highlighting the development of the various different towns throughout the District. A 'Winston Churchill' pictorial exhibition had also been commissioned as a former Member of Parliament for the District. Members were encouraged to visit the Museum and to inform anyone who wished to volunteer for the Museum.

The Democratic Services Team Manager, G Woodhall, provided an update on the two outstanding nominations to Outside Bodies from the Annual Council meeting in May.

For the Epping Forest Local Liaison Groups, confirmation of the final number of nominations had been requested. The next meeting of the Liaison Group would be in December 2024, so this could be decided at the next ordinary meeting of the Council on 15 October 2024.

For the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel, Essex County Council had confirmed that the number of nominations from the District Council should be four and there were currently four nominations outstanding from the Annual Council meeting.

Cllr C C Pond felt that the nominations should be more balanced across the political groups than they were at the current time, and proposed that this should also be deferred to the next ordinary Council meeting on 15 October 2024. Cllr J M Whitehouse disagreed and felt that the four current nominations should be agreed, but the proposal was seconded by Cllr C Whitbread.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the nominations to the Epping Forest Local Liaison Group and the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel be deferred to the next ordinary meeting of the Council on 15 October 2024.

**25 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Council noted that there were no items of business which necessitated the exclusion of the public and press from the meeting.

**CHAIRMAN**