

## **EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES**

**Committee:** Council **Date:** 27 October 2005

**Place:** Civic Offices, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 9.00 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors B Sandler (Chairman), Mrs A Haigh (Vice-Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, S Barnes, D Bateman, Mrs M Boatman, Mrs D Borton, Mrs P Brooks, R Chidley, M Colling, Mrs D Collins, Mrs J Davis, Mrs R Gadsby, R Glozier, P Gode, R Goold, Mrs A Grigg, J Hart, M Heavens, D Jacobs, J Knapman, Mrs J Lea, A Lee, F Maclaine, J Markham, L Martin, Mrs M McEwen, P McMillan, S Metcalfe, R Morgan, S Murray, Mrs S Perry, Mrs C Pond, Mrs P Richardson, T Richardson, Mrs M Sartin, Mrs P Smith, D Spinks, D Stallan, Ms S Stavrou, G Stollar, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, M Woollard and K Wright

**Apologies:** Councillors J Demetriou, R D'Souza, K Faulkner, A Green, Mrs H Harding, D Kelly and Mrs P K Rush

**Officers Present:** J Scott (Joint Chief Executive), R Palmer (Head of Finance), J Preston (Head of Planning and Economic Development), Ian White (Senior Planning Officer), H Stamp (Principal Planning Officer), I Willett (Head of Research and Democratic Services), R Barwell (Public Relations and Internet Officer), A Wintle (Planning Officer) and Z Folley (Democratic Services Assistant)

### **48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors Mrs C Pond, K Angold – Stephens and J Markham declared personal interests in agenda item 3 (a) (Local Plan Alterations Redeposit). They declared that their interests were not prejudicial and that they would remain in the meeting for the duration of the consideration of the item and voting thereon.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and K Wright declared personal interests in agenda item 3 (a) (Local Plan Alterations Re - deposit). They declared that their interests were not prejudicial and that they would remain in the meeting for the duration of the consideration of the item and voting thereon.

(c) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors, Mrs A Grigg and D Stallan declared personal interests in agenda item 3 (a) (Local Plan Alterations Redeposit) by virtue of being members of North Weald Parish Council. They declared that their interests were not prejudicial and that they would remain in the meeting for the duration of the consideration of the item and voting thereon.

(d) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Mrs D Borton declared a personal interest in agenda item 3 (a) (Local Plan Alterations Redeposit) by virtue of having made personal representations on the redeposit. She declared that her interest was not prejudicial and that she would remain in the meeting for the duration of the consideration of the item and voting thereon.

(e) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor R Chidley declared a personal interest in agenda item 3 (a) (Local Plan Alterations Redeposit) by virtue of having made personal representations on the deposit. He declared that his interest was not prejudicial and that he would remain in the meeting for the duration of the consideration of the item but would refrain from voting.

#### **49. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported that the funeral of Charlotte Kelly, the wife of Councillor Doug Kelly had taken place on 6 October 2005 at St Nicolas Church, Fyfield. He advised that he and his wife had attended the funeral. He stated that Councillor Kelly had been pleased to see so many Officers and Members at the service and wished to express his thanks for the generous donations which had been made to the Macmillan Cancer Trust in memory of Charlotte which totalled over £2,000. He reported that Councillor Kelly was not able to attend tonight's meeting because of a chest infection.

#### **50. REPORTS OF THE CABINET**

**(Mover: Councillor R Glozier– Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development)**

##### **(a) Local Plan Alterations Re - deposit**

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development presented the report and by leave of the Council amended the officer recommendation on Policy E13A (New and Replacement Glasshouses') and deleted wording in paragraph 5.89a of GB17B (iv) (Green Belt).

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development drew attention to the recommendations in the report, the timetable for completion and the likely consequences of not pursuing the alterations.

The Portfolio Holder requested that the Council considered each chapter of the redeposit in turn. The Head of Planning and Economic Development reported on the threshold for and the dispersal at which affordable housing was sought.

**First Amendment moved by Councillor K Wright and seconded by Councillor D Spinks**

That Policy GB 14 A (iii b) (Residential extension) be amended by deleting the existing wording of the officer response and substituting the following:

That representation GB14 A (iii) (b) be amended to read:

"Policy GB14 A (iii b) should be reinstated subject to the total size of the dwelling as extended (including conservatories) and exceeding the total floorspace of the original dwelling, should be normally by no more than 50 square metres whichever of (a) and (b) is the larger."

**Carried.**

**Second amendment moved by Councillor Mrs D Borton and seconded by Councillor R Morgan.**

That the following amendments be made to Policy E13A (New and Replacement Glasshouses) (as previously altered by the Portfolio Holder) be approved:

Namely that the following be deleted:

“either” in line 4

“a small-scale” in sub section (i)

“modest” in sub-section (ii)

and that sub-section (3) of Policy E13A be amended to read “in total the extension(s) will be no greater than ½ hectare”.

**Lost.**

Report as amended: **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the officers’ responses to the representations made on the Redeposit be agreed subject to the following amendments:

(a) That the words ‘over the next 3-4 agricultural cycles’ be deleted from sentence three in paragraph 589a GB17B (iv) (Green Belt) and;

(b) That Policy E13A (New and Replacement Glasshouses) be replaced by the following:

Planning permission will be granted for a new and replacement horticultural glasshouses within areas identified for this purpose on the Alterations Proposals Map. Glasshouses will not be permitted outside the areas subject to this policy unless the proposed development is either:

(i) a replacement of, or a small scale extension to, a glasshouse or nursery outside the areas identified on the Alterations Proposals Map; or

(ii) necessary for the modest expansion of glasshouse or existing horticulture undertaking on a site at the edge of an area identified on the Alterations Proposals Map which is unable to expand because all the available land in that designated area is occupied by viable glasshouse undertakings, and where there is no suitable land (including redundant glasshouse land) in this or the other glasshouse areas identified on the Alterations Proposals Map; and in all cases the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the open character or appearance of the countryside; and

(c) That Policy GB 14 A (item iii b) (Residential extension) be amended to read ‘The total size of the dwelling as extended (including conservatories) exceeding the total floorspace of the original dwelling, normally by more than 50 square metres whichever of (a) and (b) is the larger’.

(2) That the Alterations proceed to Public Inquiry (programmed for late February 2006);and

(3) That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development be authorised to take decisions on subsequent changes to policies and text, prior to the commencement of the Inquiry, following further negotiation with

objectors (as explained in paragraph 3.5 of the report) and that any changes be reported to members in the Members Bulletin; and

(4) That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development be authorised to adopt the Local Plan Alterations following receipt of the binding Inspector's Report in the particular circumstances described in paragraph 5.3 of the report. And, that the Leader of the Council be authorised to act in place of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development in case he was unavailable.

(5) That Planning Services be thanked for their enormous input into the preparation of the Local Plan Alterations Redeposit.

**(b) Planning and Economic Development Services – Restructuring**

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development presented a report on the proposed restructure of the Planning and Economic Development Services. He drew attention to the problems that existed within the current structure, the attributes of a reconfiguration, professional and operational arrangements, costs envisaged and expected outcomes. The Portfolio Holder stated that the restructure aimed to improve the efficiency of the service and increase its performance against Best Value Performance Indicators.

The Leader of the Council referred to the process for the approval of CSB Bid growth items. He stated that the procedure ensured that bids could be considered and prioritised as part of the budget making process and could if the need arose be adjusted to accommodate urgent or unplanned items. He emphasised the importance of this process. The Portfolio Holder acknowledged these views which were supported by several Members.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED:**

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the new structure for Planning & Economic Development Services be agreed.

(2) That the additional costs generated by the new structure be funded:

(a) in the current year in the sum of up to £19,500 from savings in the Planning and Economic Development staffing budgets;

(b) in future years in the sum of up to £96,000 (offset by £18,000 per annum from the Building Control ring fenced account) as an increase in the salary budget

(c) for the purposes of recommendation 2 (b) above, the normal process for approval of CSB growth items as part of the draft budget for 2006/2007 and future years be waived and this additional expenditure be confirmed at this meeting and included in the 2006/2007 budget as a committed item.

(3) That a detailed proposal be requested from TerraQuest to undertake further process mapping exercises in the last quarter of this financial year.

**51. STATUTORY STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS - 2004/05**

The Leader of the Council invited the Council to re – approve the Statutory Statement of Accounts. The information incorporated some adjustments made to the draft accounts which had been agreed with the Head of Finance in consultation with the Joint Chief Executives and other Heads of Service.

The Leader reported that the District Auditor presented the amendments in the letter he was required to produce in accordance with the Statement of Auditing Standards 610. The letter concluded that the audit was substantially complete and that he anticipated being able to issue an unqualified opinion by 31 October 2005.

The Leader undertook to confirm final conformation of the accounts in the Members Bulletin.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Statutory Statement of Accounts as updated for the financial year ending 31 March 2005 be approved.

**52. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - HIGHWAYS PANEL (WEST AREA)**

The Council were asked to appoint a member representative to the Highways Panel (West Area). The Council noted that the Panel would oversee the Local Services Agreement with Essex County Council in succession to the former Highways Agency, and provide Member Liaison between the district/boroughs and County Councils.

It was reported that a review of how the Panel was working would take place after its first year of operation in November 2006.

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Mrs A Grigg be appointed as the Council representative on the Highways Panel for West Essex.

**CHAIRMAN**