

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

Committee: Council **Date:** 1 November 2016

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 7.55 pm

Members Present: Councillors J Lea (Chairman), D Stallan (Vice-Chairman), N Avey, R Baldwin, R Bassett, A Beales, H Brady, W Breare-Hall, R Brookes, R Butler, K Chana, D Dorrell, L Girling, A Grigg, S Heap, L Hughes, R Jennings, J Jennings, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Knapman, Y Knight, M McEwen, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, S Neville, J Philip, C P Pond, C C Pond, B Rolfe, G Shiell, B Surtees, G Waller, E Webster, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

Apologies: Councillors N Bedford, A Boyce, G Chambers, R Gadsby, A Lion, L Mead, A Mitchell, A Patel, C Roberts, D Roberts, B Sandler, M Sartin and S Stavrou

Officers Present: G Chipp (Chief Executive), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), R Palmer (Director of Resources), C O'Boyle (Director of Governance), A Hall (Director of Communities), S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), R Perrin (Democratic Services Officer), S Kits (Social Media and Customer Services Officer), A Hendry (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and P Seager (Chairman's Secretary)

54. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant Director of Governance and Performance Management 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.

55. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 September 2016 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendments;

Item 46 – Statutory Statement of accounts 2015/16, the replacement of '2014/15' with '2015/16' in the resolution; and

Item 42 - Questions by Members without Notice, the inclusion of the word 'Forest' in question (c) Public Transport, when mentioning the Epping Transport Action Group.

56. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

57. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Announcements by the Chairman of Council

(i) Chairman's Events

The Chairman advised that she had attended a go kart charity event in Brentwood hosted by 'Racing Green', where she had been presented with a cheque for £7206 for her chosen charities. She had also attended the opening of a nursery in North Weald.

(ii) Floral Display

The Chairman announced that she proposed to send the flowers from this evenings meeting to Cunningham House, North Weald.

58. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

The Council noted that there were no public questions under notice for the meeting.

59. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

The Council noted that there were no questions by Members under notice for the meeting.

60. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

(a) The Leader of the Council

The Leader advised that he had attended various meetings around the District including meeting the new principal at Epping Forest College, the West Essex and Essex Leaders meeting regarding the new local quadrante (Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford) discussions with Public Health England about their plans for Harlow and the launch of the Council's Local Plan Consultation. He advised Members that they should have a Local Plan pack to help assist the public in completing the Draft Local Plan Consultation and to ensure that as many responses as possible were received.

(b) Finance Portfolio Holder

Councillor G Mohindra advised that the Council had not received a response from the Government regarding the acceptance of the multi-year settlement. He advised that around 90% of the Local Authorities had accepted the 4 year settlement, although no official announcements had been made.

(c) Planning Policy Portfolio Holder

Councillor J Philip advised that the Draft Local Plan Consultation had opened as scheduled on 31 October 2016 and post cards had been distributed at the tube/train stations within the District and leaflets had been delivered to residents. He encouraged people to respond with supported evidence.

61. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**(a) Unauthorised Encampments on Limes Farm, Chigwell**

Councillor G Mohindra asked the Environment Portfolio Holder for an update on the unauthorised encampment on Limes Farm, Chigwell.

Councillor W Breare-Hall advised that the Council had moved swiftly and initiated legal proceedings with a Court date set for 2 November 2016. The people within the encampment had advised the Council that they were leaving on 2 November 2016 and the Council's staff would be monitoring the situation.

(b) Epping Forest Careline Alarm Monitoring Service

Councillor S Murray asked the Housing Portfolio Holder for assurance that one of the four options being considered by the Cabinet for the future delivery of the Epping Forest Careline Alarm Monitoring Service be run by the Council.

Councillor C Whitbread answered on behalf of the Housing Portfolio Holder who had offered her apologies. He advised that he had not seen the details of the report but believed one of the four options included a Council run service.

(c) Street Cleansing

Councillor S Neville asked the Environmental Portfolio Holder whether there was a mechanism for cross checking the street cleansing of roads within the District.

Councillor W Breare-Hall advised that street cleansing should take place on both sides of the roads and supervisors were in position to check that this was being completed correctly. He asked that Councillor S Neville to share the details of the roads concerned and he would follow it up.

(d) Fly Tipping

Councillor H Kauffman stated that there had been an increase in flying tipping, in particular the edges of the forest and that the fines incurred were not deterring the offenders. He advised that he was not sure whether this was a result of the Recycle Centres now not accepting household DIY and construction waste.

Councillor W Breare-Hall advised that it was a big issue for the District, but where possible the Council would prosecute. He understood that it was hard to find evidence on the people dumping rubbish but the Council aimed to limit the problem with publicity and education. The Essex County Council had advised that they would monitor the situation with regard to the non-acceptance of household DIY and construction waste.

(e) Epping Forest Retail Park

Councillor C C Pond asked the Asset and Economic Development Portfolio Holder whether she could name any further retailers that had signed up to the Epping Forest Retail Park and whether she thought there would be any affect under the National Non Domestic Rates 2017 revaluation on the viability and stability of the Retail Park.

Councillor A Grigg advised that she had no further updates on future retailers and she would seek advice and provide a written reply to his second question in the Members Bulletin.

(f) Unauthorised Encampments on Burney Drive, Loughton

Councillor D Wixley asked the Environment Portfolio Holder for an update on the unauthorised encampment on Burney Drive, Loughton and on how long it would take for an order to be obtained for the encampment at Burney Drive.

Councillor W Breare-Hall advised that the Council was taking these matters seriously and that the Council had proceeded with legal action to have the encampment removed. Unfortunately he did not know how long it would take to obtain the order but he would come back to him with the details.

(g) Leisure Centres

Councillor J M Whitehouse asked the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder about the Leisure Centres sites being identified within the Draft Local Plan for redevelopment and asked for reassurances that the Leisure Centres would not be closed before replacement services/sites were found in the same sort of locations.

Councillor H Kane advised that the Leisure Centres would be part of the Leisure Review and that the Cabinet would look at everything when considering their decisions.

(h) Local Plan

Councillor J H Whitehouse asked the Planning Policy Portfolio Holder whether it would be possible to add road names to some of the maps provided within the Draft Local Plan, so that residents could more easily identify the sites on the map.

Councillor J Philip advised that the maps had been made as accessible as possible and changes could not be made as the consultation was live. Residents were advised to attend manned exhibitions and Members could look at the pro-forms, which provided more details to help residents. He advised that residents could contact the Council if they were having any further problems.

(i) Police's Non Emergency Telephone Number

Councillor L Girling asked the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder about concerns that had been raised by residents during the Halloween period whilst using the Police's non emergency telephone number, 101 and not being able to get through to speak to anyone. He advised that he knew that the Police would be attending the next Communities Select Committee but was the Portfolio Holder aware of when this problem would be addressed.

Councillor G Waller advised that the demands on the Police resources during this period of year increased and that it would be a good question to put to the Communities Select Committee on 8 November 2016, where all members could attend. There was a meeting of the Essex Police and Crime Panel, where he would raise these issues.

(j) Leisure Centres

Councillor S Murray asked the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder to clarify her comments regarding the Leisure Review and the proposed sites within the Draft Local Plan Consultation.

Councillor H Kane advised that the Council was currently considering the Leisure Contracts and that she was not at liberty to disclose any further information. The tenders had been received and were being considered and further information would be discussed at the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group on Leisure Management on Thursday 10 November 2016 and a presentation to Cabinet would follow in due course.

62. MOTIONS

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

63. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT & INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2016/17 - 2018/19.

Mover: Councillor G Mohindra, Finance Portfolio Holder

Councillor G Mohindra submitted a report regarding changes to the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2016/17 – 2018/19.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the following changes to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy be approved;
 - (a) an increase in the group limit for Local Authorities from £20million to £25million;
 - (b) an increase in the group limit for Money Market Funds from £15million to £20million; and
 - (c) an increase in the limit for NatWest (the Council's banker) from £2.5million to £5million.

64. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no questions to the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

65. CALL- IN AND URGENCY - COUNCIL HOUSEBUILDING - PHASE I TENDER (RECOVERY PACKAGE)

The Council noted that the Chairman of the Council had agreed that the following decision be treated as a matter of urgency and not subject to call in:

- (a) That P. A. Finlay and Company Limited be awarded the Design and Build Contract for the recovery phase of the construction works making up Phase 1 of the Council's Housebuilding Programme in Waltham Abbey, in the negotiated contract sum of £2,674,335.10; and
- (b) That a contingency sum be set aside for any unforeseen matters that might materialise once works had commenced on site.

66. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- (a) The Council received a written report regarding the Royal Gunpowder Mills from Councillor H Kane, the Council's representative.
- (b) There were no requests made for written reports at the next meeting.

CHAIRMAN