

# **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES**

**Committee:** Council **Date:** 1 November 2018

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 8.29 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors R Bassett (Chairman), R Gadsby (Vice-Chairman), R Baldwin, H Brady, P Bolton, R Brookes, L Burrows, G Chambers, K Chana, D Dorrell, A Grigg, I Hadley, S Heap, S Heather, R Jennings, J Jennings, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Knapman, J Lea, A Lion, M McEwen, A Mitchell, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Neville, M Owen, A Patel, J Philip, C P Pond, B Rolfe, M Sartin, J Share-Bernia, P Stalker, S Stavrou, D Stocker, B Vaz, E Webster, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

**Apologies:** Councillors N Avey, A Beales, N Bedford, L Hughes, S Jones, Y Knight, L Mead, S Murray, C C Pond, C Roberts, D Roberts, B Sandler and D Sunger

**Officers Present:** D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), G Blakemore (Strategic Director), S Hill (Service Director (Governance & Member Services)), P Maddock (Assistant Director (Accountancy)), S Kits (Social Media and Customer Services Officer), S Mitchell (PR Website Editor) and R Perrin (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

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## **44. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Service Director, Governance and Members Services 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.

## **45. MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting on 25 September 2018 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## **46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor G. Mohindra declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 11 - Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool Site Development by virtue of Essex Housing Services being part of his Essex County Council Cabinet Portfolio. He advised that he would leave the meeting for the discussion and decision of this item.

## **47. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **(a) Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman informed the Council that he had attended many events, which included the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of St John's Primary School; promotion of

the Youth Council's Drug Awareness Project and the Recycling Awards. He had also promoted the District at various events to the neighbouring authorities and London boroughs.

He advised that the Chairman's charity quiz had been confirmed for Friday 1 February 2018 and that he would be raising funds for the Chess Homeless charity by sleeping outside at Chelmsford Cathedral on 30 November 2018.

**(b) Flowers**

The Chairman announced that he intended to send the flowers from tonight's meeting to the Queens Court Nursing Home, Buckhurst Hill.

**48. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

The Council noted that there were no public questions for this meeting.

**49. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE**

**Question by Councillor S. Heap to the Assets and Economic Development Portfolio Holder and the Environment Portfolio Holder**

**(1) Epping Forest Shopping Park**

"Following the full occupation of the retail park, could the respective portfolio holders enlighten us as to the following:

(a) what measures are in place to constantly assess the economic impact of the retail park on businesses in the District?

(b) by what criteria are we assessing whether the retail park has been a success?

(c) how do we know if it has offset business failures in the surrounding area?

(d) what assessments have been carried out to measure extra pollution, if any, generated by traffic build up in the local streets?"

**Answer to Councillor S. Heap from Councillor A. Grigg, Assets and Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

"(a) and (c) A retail impact study by Lichfield & Partners is currently being carried out to assess the impact of the shopping park on neighbouring areas. This is something I have previously stated would happen and was requested by the Broadway Town Centre Partnership. This is expected to be available by the end of 2018. The study will test the impact of the shopping park and provide a before and after comparison. The previous study was a requirement of planning at the time in 2009.

(b) The fact that all units are let (tenant demand), retailers are reporting good sales figures (i.e. consumer demand), and the return on investment is in line or above market expectations for this type of property indicates that the Shopping Park is a success.

(d) We monitor air quality at various locations throughout the district, however we do not have any monitoring points in the vicinity of the Broadway/that end of Rectory

Lane. So, I guess the simple answer is that we don't know the impact of the recent changes on air pollution. We generally focus air quality monitoring locations on those where there are residential properties in close proximity to busy roads/regular standing traffic as this would mean there is a source / pathway / receptor link. Obviously, Langston Road is not residential, and the Broadway/Rectory Lane properties are set back a fair distance from the road and therefore less likely to be exposed to high concentrations. We have a finite resource for this type of monitoring which is why we concentrate our efforts at those locations where we think they will have the most impact. However, I will keep this under review."

**Supplementary Question by Councillor S. Heap to the Assets and Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

"When was the impact study commissioned?"

**Answer to Councillor S. Heap from Councillor A. Grigg, Assets and Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

"The impact study was commissioned in October 2018 and should be completed by Christmas 2018. The company that would undertake the impact study were Lichfields, who had previously conducted a similar study for the Council in 2010."

**50. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

The Council received written reports from all the 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.

(a) The Leader of Council

The Leader advised that he had attended a number of meetings around the District including the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and the local Citizen Advice offices in Epping.

On Monday he had updated the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the achievement of the authority's corporate priorities and plans for the next five years, which included the Cabinet's ambitious savings target of £2.5m over the next three years. This was in order to protect front line services, keep Council Tax low and cease the reliance on government grants by the end of 2023. These aims were to be achieved through the People Strategy, Accommodation Strategy and the ICT Strategy. He advised that there was still a commitment to re-develop the condor building, as set out in the Local Plan and use smarter and flexible working. The new common operating model had been implemented, which focused on the customer and had driven efficiencies which brought together the business functions across the Council.

Furthermore, the Local Plan was back on track following the Judicial Review and this had been submitted with the examination in public expected in March/April 2019. The shopping park had been trading well and the Council was now in the position to take forward the St John's Road Site, Epping, to potentially develop a new leisure centre. In addition the community policing funded by the Council had made an impact on the fear of crime and was working well with Park Guard.

Finally the Financial Issues Paper had been published and the budget process had begun. The Cabinet looked forward to bringing forward a low Council Tax budget and securing the Council's aims for the future.

(b) Finance Portfolio Holder

Councillor G. Mohindra advised that the Local Government Settlement would be published on 6 December 2018.

(c) Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder

Councillor S. Kane updated members on the effects of Halloween across the District. There had been 17 officers available which included regular officers, Specials, PCSO's and Park Guard which had resulted in fewer incidents that were dealt with swiftly.

**51. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**

(a) Diwali

Councillor A. Patel invited the Chairman to light five Diya's in the Members Room following the meeting, in celebration of Diwali on 7 November 2018.

(b) Leisure Centre - St John's Site

Councillor H. Whitbread asked the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder how the consultation process was progressing for the proposed new Epping Leisure Centre and when would members be able to see initial plans.

Councillor H. Kane advised that external consultants had already been appointed to carry out the consultation and viability studies with Stakeholders and Ward Councillors being invited to discuss the future development. No timescale could be given at the moment, although she would update members before the end of the year.

(c) Section 106 Funds

Councillor J. Knapman asked the Planning and Governance Portfolio Holder to ensure that the Council did not send Section 106 funds to the incorrect recipient and to provide assurances that Chigwell Parish Council would correctly receive future Section 106 funding.

Councillor J. Philip advised that he would investigate the issue regarding the misplacement of the funds to Chigwell Parish Council and that with the Section 106 Officer in place would ensure that funds were correctly designated.

(d) Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre

Councillor L. Webster asked the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder whether any consideration had been given to the potential increased usage and parking facilities that would be required at new Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre.

Councillor S. Kane advised that adequate parking provisions had been provided and that the Council had been very aware of the residential nature of the site at the new Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre. There were approximately 100 parking bays, available to the leisure centre users that were free of charge for up to 3 hours and also a coach parking bay.

(e) Epping Town Council Christmas Market

Councillor L. Burrows asked the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder whether there would be free parking at the Cottis Lane, Epping car park on the 7 December 2018 for the Epping Town Christmas Market.

Councillor S. Kane advised that this was correct and that the Council was providing free weekend parking at all Council carparks throughout December 2018.

(f) Epping Forest Retail Park

Councillor M. Owen asked the Assets and Economic Development Portfolio Holder whether there would be any studies on the impact of traffic queuing throughout Loughton in regards to the Retail Park and that all day parking was occurring.

Councillor A. Grigg advised that the queuing issues had been identified with regards to parking by the Aldi retail unit and the Council was approaching Essex County Council for advice. Regarding the all day parking at the Retail Park, the Council was aware of the activity and would be taking action on those vehicles. The issues were being investigated and solutions were being considered.

(g) Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre – Use by Primary Schools

Councillor R. Brookes asked the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder to update members on the opening plans of the new Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre and what was Places for Peoples' approach, to attracting new people and primary schools to attend and use the new facilities.

Councillor H. Kane advised that the new Leisure centre would be opening on 17 November 2018 at 2 pm, with guests to arrive at 1.30pm. She stated that Places for People were engaging with local residents and primary schools.

(h) Policing

Councillor D. Wixley asked the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder if he could report back to the Council on the benefits and operations of the locally funded Police Officers for the District.

Councillor S. Kane advised that a six monthly review would be taking place with Communities Select Committee and a new Twitter account had been set up advising on the activity of these officers. (@EppingForestCSP) Currently, the officers had been tasked to deal with hot spots within the District, which included burglars in the South of the District. He advised that where possible, he would keep members updated through the Members Bulletin.

## 52. MOTIONS

(a) Honorary Alderman – Scheme for Epping Forest

**Moved by Councillor J. Philip and seconded by Councillor C. Whitbread**

“That, in recognition that the Council has the option, under the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on any person who, in the opinion of the Council has rendered eminent services to the Authority, asks the Chief Executive to:

- (i) report further to the Council's Constitution Working Group on proposals that would bring forward such a scheme to enable the Council to confer a title; and
- (ii) asks that the Working Group report back to the full Council on the adoption of such a scheme together with the likely resources required."

**Carried**

**Motion as first moved ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That, in recognition that the Council has the option, under the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on any person who, in the opinion of the Council has rendered eminent services to the Authority, asks the Chief Executive to:

- (i) report further to the Council's Constitution Working Group on proposals, to bring forward a scheme to enable the Council to confer a title; and
- (ii) that the Working Group reports back to the full Council on the adoption of such a scheme together with the likely resources required.

**53. EPPING FOREST LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL**

**Mover: Councillor S. Kane, Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder**

Councillor S. Kane presented a report seeking a supplementary estimate for matching funding for the Local Highways Panel to implement a number of highway schemes in the District.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That a District Development Fund supplementary of £100,000 for highway improvement to match fund the contribution from Essex County Council for the Epping Forest Local Highways Panel, to implement highway improvement schemes within the District for 2018/19 be approved.

**54. WALTHAM ABBEY SWIMMING POOL SITE - DEVELOPMENT**

**Mover: Councillor A. Grigg, Asset & Economic Development Portfolio Holder**

Councillor A. Grigg presented a report seeking a supplementary estimate for the outline planning application and the demolition of the swimming pool at the existing Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool site.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That a Capital supplementary sum of £275,000 for the preparation of the outline planning application and the demolition of the old Waltham Abbey swimming pool be approved.

**55. LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT - SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL ESTIMATE****Mover: Councillor H. Kane, Leisure & Community Services Portfolio Holder**

Councillor H. Kane presented a report seeking a Capital supplementary estimate for the unanticipated costs in relation to the construction of Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre and other Leisure Centre refurbishments at Loughton Leisure Centre and Epping Sports Centre. In addition a further Capital supplementary was sought, to undertake the partial demolition of the vacant buildings and site investigation surveys on the former junior school site in St John's Road, Epping.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED****RESOLVED:**

- (1) That a Capital supplementary of £225,000 for the unanticipated costs in relation to the construction of Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre and other Leisure Centre refurbishments at Loughton Leisure Centre and Epping Sports Centre be approved; and
- (2) That a Capital supplementary of £475,000 to undertake the partial demolition of the vacant buildings and site investigation surveys on the former Junior School site in St John's Road, Epping be approved.

**56. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANELS - APPOINTMENT**

The Council noted and endorsed the appointment of Tina Finn to the vacant seat on the Independent Remuneration Panel.

**57. SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL - REVIEW**

The Monitoring Officer advised that the Scheme of Delegations within the Council's Constitution required updating following the recent restructuring of the Council's senior management. No new delegations were being sought as a result of the proposed revisions. Further revisions would be required at the December Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That where an Statutory Officer was named in person within the Scheme of Delegations, their job title be included; and
- (2) That the revised Scheme of Delegations by or on Behalf of the Council be agreed.

**58. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny, Councillor M. Sartin reported that officers from the Manchester Airport Group had attended the most recent meeting, to discuss issues concerning Stansted Airport including the planned expansion, sustainable development plans and the effects on the Districts residents.

In addition, the Leader gave a mid-year update on the achievement of the authority's corporate priorities. The Corporate Plan 2018/23 – Performance Report Quarter 1 – 2018/19, the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions and the work programmes were also considered. Finally, members discussed a review of the Overview and

Scrutiny Select Committee Framework, which set out intentions to align the Select Committees with the new officer structure and Portfolio Holder responsibilities. Councillor M. Sartin asked all members to consider and comment on the consultation which had been sent out in the Members Bulletin.

At the next meeting on 18 December 2018, the committee would be scrutinising the implementation of the Council's People Strategy.

#### **59. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

(a) Councillor R. Morgan updated the Council on the Stansted Airport Community Trust Fund and the various grants which had been given out. He advised that projects, groups and organisations could apply to the scheme, if they were located within a 10 mile radius of the airport. This included areas within the north of the district. Councillor M. Sartin asked whether the Stansted Airport Community Trust Fund would consider areas that were within the turning circle of airport, although not within the 10 mile radius. Councillor R. Morgan advised that this issue would be raised and discussed at the next meeting in March 2019.

(b) The Council received a written report regarding the Royal Gunpowder Mills from Councillor H. Kane and the Grange Farm Trust from Councillors M. Sartin and M McEwen, who were the Council's Representatives. Councillor C.P. Pond enquired about further details on the grants that were given out by the Grange Farm Trust. Councillor M. Sartin advised that she provided the information in the Members Bulletin.

(c) Councillor J.H. Whitehouse requested an update from the Strategic Partnership. Councillor C Whitbread advised that the partnership was not represented in the same way as before, although the Cabinet would ensure that an update would be brought forward.

**CHAIRMAN**