



COUNCIL MEETING

Members are summoned to attend a Meeting

of the Town Council to be held at **7.45pm** on

Wednesday 18 October 2017

at Loughton Library and Town Hall, Traps Hill, Loughton IG10 1HD

to transact the business as shown in the agenda.

Enid K Walsh
Town Clerk
12 October 2017

Councillor P Abraham (Town Mayor)
Councillor S Murray (Deputy Town Mayor)

J Angold-Stephens	P Beales	R Brookes	T Cochrane
B Cohen	M Dalton	C Davies	T Downing
L Girling	J Jennings	K Latchford	J Mahoney
S Murphy	A Omer	T Owen	S Pewsey
C C Pond	C P Pond	M Stubbings	D Wixley

Note to Councillors:
If you are unable to attend the meeting,
please phone your apologies
to the office on 020 8508 4200

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2 Declarations of Interest**
For Councillors to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any items on the Agenda.
- 3 Confirmation of Minutes**
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2017.
- 4 Public Representations**
To hear any representations from members of the public who have registered a request to address the Council in accordance with Standing Order no 1(h).
- 5 Questions Without Discussion**
To answer any questions which have been submitted in accordance with Standing Order no 8.
- 6 Town Mayor's Engagements and Announcements**
The Town Mayor will report on any events he has attended to represent the Town Council.
- 7 Matters for Report**
To report any further significant information on matters which have been previously discussed, in addition to those which may already be included on the Agenda.
 - 7.1 Essex Association of Local Councils – Min no 99**
The Council's motion regarding poor air quality was adopted by the County Association at its AGM on 19 September 2017:
 - 7.2 Council of the Year Award**
Cllrs C C Pond and Wixley, accompanied by the Town Clerk, attended the Essex Association of Local Councils AGM and conference in September and were presented with the 2017 Essex Council of the Year Award.

This recognised the Town Council's work in the community and in particular the provision of:
 - a range of low cost / free activities and events to help low income families;
 - a generous grant budget to help local organisations and charities to further their vital work;
 - a lead on the fight to counter proposals in the draft Local Plan for the development of many of the town's green spaces;and with the recent office move to the Library:
 - improved access to the Town Council for our residents; and
 - helping safeguard the future of the library by creating a thriving community hub.
- 8 Reports from Members on Outside Organisations**
 - 8.1 To receive brief reports from representatives on outside organisations**
Council representatives on outside organisations are requested to make a

written report, which is attached to the Agenda, on meetings which they have attended. A verbal report can be made on meetings attended within ten days of the Council meeting.

- i. Citizens Advice Epping Forest District – 3 October 2017 – Cllr Angold-Stephens
- ii. Campaign to Protect Rural Essex (CPREssex) – 7 October 2017 – Cllr Abraham

* See pages 3 – 4 for the reports.

9 Reports from Committees

9.1 Planning and Licensing

Held on 17 and 31 July, 21 August, 11 and 25 September 2017.

9.2 Recreation

Held on 6 September 2017.

9.3 Environment and Heritage

Held on 20 September 2017.

9.4 Resources and General Services

Held on 11 October 2017.

10 Accounts and Audit 2016/17

* A copy of the External Auditor Report and Certificate is provided on page 5. This confirms that on the basis of their review of the annual return, in their opinion the information in the annual return was in accordance with proper practices and no other matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements had not been met.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was published on 8 September 2017 on the noticeboards around the town and may be viewed on the Council's website.

11 Review of Epping Forest District Council's Housing Allocations Scheme

The District Council is undertaking a 12 week consultation on the proposed changes to the scheme.

* A copy of the invitation letter is provided on pages 6 – 7. The consultation document and details of the current scheme may be found at

<http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/residents/your-home/housing-advice/14-residents/your-home/housing/1394-housing-allocations-scheme-consultation>

Members requiring a paper copy of the documents are asked to contact the Town Council Office.

Enid K Walsh
TOWN CLERK
12 October 2017

Agenda item 8.1

Reports from Outside Organisations

i) Citizens Advice – Epping Forest District AGM and Board Meeting – 3 October 2017

The chairman introduced two new trustees and thanks were recorded to a trustee who had resigned since the previous meeting. Four trustees were re-elected. Janet Woods was re-elected to the chair. She then explained about the three members who are able to vote at the AGM. There is an application process for new members and it is usual for a CAB to have a small number of members only.

Recruitment is progressing in relation to a new District Manager to replace Rachel Poulter who had to resign for personal reasons. There is also a vacancy for one bureau Advice Services Manager.

The Annual Report was presented and attention was drawn to the fact that 2,371 clients were helped on one or more occasions with some 7,965 issues. The top issue was benefits and tax issues (35%), with debt (17%) being second. The money advice team assisted with debt problems to a total value of some £2,204,140. They also gained additional benefit and tax credits for residents to the value of £1,956,830 as well as providing food bank vouchers and vouchers for Epping Reuse Centre. Actual figures will be in excess of these as some clients do not feedback this information. The trustees were commended on the quality and contents of the Annual Report.

Fund raising is a small but important source of income for the district. The proposed quiz has been proposed until early in 2018 (January or February) and there is to be a Three Rivers Choir Concert on Saturday 9 December at Loughton Methodist Church, tickets £10 each. Please support this if you can. I am able to get tickets or they can be bought on the door.

There is a small deficit on the 2016/17 accounts but a larger one is expected on the 2017/18 accounts. This cannot be allowed to continue and efforts are being made to gain funds from new sources including those local councils who currently do not contribute. An anonymous donation of £6,000 has been received and is much appreciated.

Analysis of client visits showed that Fairmead, Broadway and Alderton were the wards in Loughton having the most issues. Staff are gearing up for the introduction of universal credit when there will be a minimum six week wait for benefit. Work is also progressing to start outreach sessions at Ongar Library, Norway House and Limes Farm. The new Epping Office is continuing to grow the number of clients visiting following its opening earlier in the year although it is thought that there are still some who are going to Loughton instead.

Cllr Jill Angold-Stephens

ii Campaign to Protect Rural Essex (CPREssex)

I attended the AGM of 'Campaign to Protect Rural Essex' held at the Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey on 7 October 2017. CPREssex campaigns on important issues affecting the Essex countryside.

CPREssex's Planning Officer Michael Hand was present at the meeting. Michael informed the meeting that he is available for advice on planning matters to Councils and can provide comments on Local and Neighbourhood plans on behalf of CPREssex.

CPREssex chairman, Angie Jamison stepped down from the post as she has now moved to Lincolnshire. The meeting elected new officials, but could not fill the position of Chairman. CPREssex is looking for a new person who cares passionately about the protection of our countryside, to take the role as chairman.

The meeting was preceded by a talk about the unique treasures of the Waltham Abbey Museum by its staff member, Francesca Pellegrino. She explained the importance of some of the items on display and how they came into the possession of the museum.

Cllr Philip Abraham

Agenda item 10
Accounts and Audit 2016/17

Section 3 – External auditor report and certificate

In respect of:

Enter name of
smaller authority here:

LOUGHTON TOWN COUNCIL

1. Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This smaller authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The smaller authority prepares an annual return in accordance with proper practices which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2017; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review the annual return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and does not provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2. 2016/17 External auditor report (ex0166)

(~~Except for the matters reported below~~)* on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the smaller authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3. 2016/17 External auditor certificate

We certify/~~do not certify~~* that we have completed our review of the annual return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2017.

* We do not certify completion because:

External auditor signature PKF Littlejohn LLP

External auditor name PKF Littlejohn LLP Date 6/9/17

Note: The NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on 2016/17 accounts in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

Agenda item 11
Review of Epping Forest District Council's Housing Allocations

Date: 2 October 2017



Mrs E Walsh
Town Clerk Loughton Town Council
1 Buckingham Court
Rectory Lane
Loughton
Essex
IG10 2QZ

Civic Offices
High Street
Epping
Essex
CM16 4BZ

03 OCT 2017

Our Ref: RW/ER
Your Ref:

Dear Sir or Madam

IMPORTANT - CONSULTATION

Review of the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme

Please find enclosed a copy of the Council's draft revised Housing Allocations Scheme. I am writing to seek your comments on the Scheme. Please note the draft version is in black and white in order to reduce printing costs. The final version will mainly be available electronically with any hard copies produced in colour on request.

Under Government Guidance, authorities are given powers to decide locally how accommodation should be allocated based upon local priorities provided their Housing Allocations Schemes are both legal and rational.

The Council's Communities Select (Member) Committee has now considered changes to the Scheme and their comments have been incorporated.

Set out below are the main proposed changes that I wish to bring to your attention:

- The increase in the Residency Criteria with any new applicant who has lived in our District for less than **seven** continuous years immediately prior to their date of registration not qualifying (currently 5 continuous years)
- Any person (or member of their household) who within the previous 7 years has been guilty of serious unacceptable behaviour (defined under the Scheme) will not qualify (increased from the current 3 years)
- The penalty for refusing 2 offers of accommodation will result in an application being deferred for a period of 2 years (increased from the current 1 year)
- Any tenant of the Council who is under occupying and is wishing to move to smaller Council accommodation who refuses 3 offers of accommodation will have their application deferred for a period of 1 year (no change from the current scheme)
- Homeless applicants will be offered a 2 year Secure (fixed-term) Tenancy to give them some temporary stability in order to prepare them to make their own arrangements thereafter.
- Applicants living in Supported Housing Schemes (listed in the Scheme) will have a lesser Residency Criteria of 2 years (currently 3 years)

Continued overleaf

The new draft Scheme has been considered by an external legal advisor Stephen Knafler QC. Following his advice some further changes were made. Stephen confirms that in his opinion the Scheme is lawful. The target date for the new Housing Allocations Scheme to come into force is 1 July 2018; the Scheme will be reviewed again after 3 years of operation.

Consultation and Approval

The Council is now undertaking a 12 week consultation seeking comments from every private Registered Provider of social housing with which we have nomination arrangements, Town and Parish Councils, our Tenants and Leaseholders Panel and partner agencies with an interest in the Scheme.

Following the consultation period, the Council's Housing Portfolio Holder will consider the responses and the Cabinet will be asked to approve the Scheme at its meeting on 1 February 2018.

It would be much appreciated if you could forward me your comments as soon as possible. I would ask that you respond by **Tuesday 2 January 2018 at the latest**. I enclose a pre-paid envelope for your convenience or alternatively you can email us at:

housinginfo@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Thank you

Yours faithfully

R Wilson

R Wilson
Assistant Director (Housing Operations)