



# EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

EPPING HALL, ST JOHNS RD, EPPING, ESSEX CM16 5JU

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## TO ALL MEMBERS of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CGAC)

Cllr G Scruton (Chairman, Deputy Mayor & Finance Key Member)  
Cllr N Avey (Town Mayor)  
Cllr J A Smith (Administration Key Member)  
Beverley Rumsey (Town Clerk) (Non-voting member)

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE** to be held in the **Conference Room, Epping Hall, St Johns Road, Epping** on **Tuesday, 26th February 2019** at **8.15 pm** for the purpose of transacting the business as set out in the agenda below.

**Beverley Rumsey**  
Town Clerk  
20th February 2019

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## A G E N D A

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies and reasons for absence.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests, along with the nature of those interests, in relation to any item on this agenda.

### 3 DISPENSATIONS

To receive requests for dispensations from members concerning any item of business on this agenda.

### 4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTION TIME

The Chairman will invite public comments and responses in relation to items on this agenda. *Individuals will be permitted a maximum of three minutes each (total time for this session is limited to ten minutes).*

**5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (Attachment A)**

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2018.

**6 STATUS OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations of the CGAC from their meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 (Minutes #290–308 of 18/19) were adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018 (Minute #339 of 18/19):

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The statutory basis for this item be **NOTED** as the Audit Commission Act s9 to 11 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.
- (ii) The Statement of Internal Control and Risk Management Statement, with the Town Clerk's amendments, should be **APPROVED** by Council. ~~(Attached as Attachment K1);~~
- (iii) The Employee Handbook with the minor revisions should be **APPROVED** by Council ~~(Amendments attached as Attachment K2);~~
- (iv) The Data Protection Officer/GDPR support package should be reviewed in February 2019
- (v) No further action was required regarding internal audit reports at this time;
- (vi) No further action was required regarding the internal audit programme at this time;
- (vii) No further action was required regarding external audits at this time;
- (viii) No further action was required regarding the half-year financial position at this time;
- (ix) No further action was required regarding staffing terms, conditions & pay scales at this time;
- (x) The staffing situation should be monitored, particularly the caretaking team to reflect changing circumstances;
- (xi) Committee request that the Ledbury Case is **NOTED** ~~as per Attachment K3~~. This case highlights that any grievance issues between employees and councillors that cannot be resolved informally, should be dealt with by the monitoring officer (at Epping Forest District Council).

Council **NOTED** the Ledbury Case.

**7 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT REVIEW**

Council **APPROVED** a review of policy and governance documents at the Ordinary Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 (Minute #478 of 2015/16).

The list of policies for annual review and the dates for review are as follows:

Internal and External Audits: **February 2019** & October 2019 **(Dealt with under items 10 & 11)**

Internal Audit Programme: October 2019  
Statement on Internal Control: October 2019  
Insurance Inventory: **February 2019** (Dealt with under agenda item 22)  
Asset Register: **February 2019** (Dealt with under agenda item 12)  
Internal Risk Register: **February 2019** (Dealt with under agenda item 9)  
Staffing Terms and Conditions: **February 2019** & October 2019 (Dealt with under item 24)  
Standing Orders & Financial Regulations: **February 2019** (Dealt with under agenda item 8)  
Employee Handbook: October 2019  
Risk management statement: October 2019  
Please note these are the current recommended review dates, but legislation may amend the dates if an earlier review is required.  
Changing regulations and audit comments may add further items to this list.  
The CGAC review process leads to recommendations to Council for amendments to documents to be made.

Committee are requested to **NOTE** the above information.

## 8 **STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS** **(Attachments B & C)**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Government Act 1972, sch 12, para 42 ; Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

There have been some **recommended** changes to the model Standing Orders (**Attachment B**) in the past year and no changes to the Financial Regulations (**Attachment C**). The Town Clerk has made amendments to the model Standing Orders to capture the legislative changes (amendments highlighted).

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** The revised Standing Orders should be RECOMMENDED for ADOPTION by Council.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** The Financial Regulations (with no amendments) should be RECOMMENDED for ADOPTION by Council.

Committee should **CONSIDER** whether the emergency expenditure regulation 4.5 (a), which was put in place when the boilers at Epping Hall needed urgent replacement, should remain in place and make the appropriate RECOMMENDATIONS to Council.

## 9 **INTERNAL RISK REGISTER** **(Attachment D)**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

The Internal Risk Register has been reviewed by the Town Clerk and an addition made as elections are forthcoming.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The revised Internal Risk Register should be recommended for ADOPTION by Council.

**10 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS****(Attachment E)**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

Committee is requested to **NOTE** the first visit of the internal auditor was on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018. The second visit of the internal auditor will be on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019, with a final visit later in the year.

The internal audit report (first interim) was **NOTED** at the Ordinary Council meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2018 (Minute #398 of 2018/19). Three recommendations were made, which have been adopted. The internal audit report (second/final) for the 2018/19 financial year will be reported to Council later in the year once the second audit and report has been completed.

Committee is requested to **NOTE** this information.

**11 EXTERNAL AUDITS**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

At the Ordinary Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 (Minute #475 of 2016/17), Epping Town Council resolved to 'opt in' to the External Audit arrangements (which was recommended in this sector) and whereby Council would be allocated an external auditor from 2017-2022.

The external auditor for 2017-2022 for Essex will remain as PKF Littlejohn LLP.

Committee is requested to **NOTE** this information.

**12 ASSET REGISTER****(Attachment F)**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014

The current form of the Asset Register was ADOPTED following advice from Peter Lacey of NALC/SLCC and advice from the Audit Commission on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2010. It was reviewed by Council in October 2012 (Minutes #201 & #222 of 2012/13).

At the Ordinary Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017, Council RESOLVED to record individual items equal to or greater than £1000 in the Asset Register (Minute #537 (vi) of 2016/17).

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Asset Register records all individual items of £1000 or greater. Council have many assets whose value is less than £1000 and these are recorded in Council's inventories which are updated annually. This is standard practice.

There have been a number of acquisitions and disposals during 2018/19 which are reflected in the Asset Register 2019, as per **Attachment F**.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** the following RECOMMENDATIONS and make appropriate **RECOMMENDATIONS** to Council:

- (i) Council should continue to record assets as individual items with a value equal to or greater than £1000 in the Asset Register;
- (ii) The Asset Register 2019, as per **Attachment F**, should be APPROVED as a correct record of Council's assets at this time;
- (iii) Any revisions to the draft will be presented to full Council in March.

**13 DATA PROTECTION/PRIVACY STATEMENT (Attachments G1 & G2)**

The General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) came into effect on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Council's Data Protection Policy (approved on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 (Minute #478 of 2015/16) was rewritten as a result of the new GDPR as a GDPR working draft. This is provided as per **Attachment G1**. (Approved 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018, Minute #514 (v) of 2017/18). The Town Clerk has made some revisions (highlighted).

Epping Town Council's Privacy Statement was provided by Council's Data Protection (GDPR) Officer, as per **Attachment G2** and approved at the Annual Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018, (Minute #19 of 2018/19).

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** these documents, approve the revisions to **Attachment G1** and **DECIDE** whether to RECOMMEND them as policies of Epping Town Council.

**14 PUBLICATION SCHEME (Attachment H)**

Epping Town Council's Publication Scheme was approved at the Ordinary Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 (Minute #537 of 2016/17). We have not been advised of any necessary changes to the publication scheme. We have updated our photocopying charges to reflect up-to-date costs and these have been amended in the scheme accordingly.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Epping Town Council's Publication Scheme should be APPROVED as the Publication Scheme for Epping Town Council, with no amendments.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this RECOMMENDATION and **DECIDE** what to do.

**15 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE (Attachment I)**

Epping Town Council's complaints procedure was APPROVED on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (Minute #514 (vi) of 2017/18) and is now due for review. The Town Clerk is pleased to report that Epping Town Council receive very few formal complaints and the office team try to deal with any issues efficiently, so they do not become a complaint. There have been no issues to indicate that the complaints procedure should be revised.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Epping Town Council's Complaints Procedure should be APPROVED as the Complaints Procedure for Epping Town Council, with no amendments.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this RECOMMENDATION and **DECIDE** what to do.

16 **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY** (Attachment J)

Epping Town Council's Health & Safety Policy was APPROVED on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017 (Minute #112 of 2017/18) and is now due for review.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Epping Town Council's Health & Safety Policy should be APPROVED as the Health & Safety Policy for Epping Town Council, with minor amendments (highlighted).

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this RECOMMENDATION and **DECIDE** what to do.

17 **EQUALITY POLICY** (Attachment K)

Epping Town Council's Equality Policy was APPROVED on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017 (Minute #63 of 2017/18) and is now due for review.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Epping Town Council's Equality Policy should be APPROVED as the Equality Policy for Epping Town Council, with no amendments.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this RECOMMENDATION and **DECIDE** what to do.

18 **MEDIA POLICY** (Attachment L)

Epping Town Council's Media Policy (**Attachment L**) was APPROVED on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 (Minute #537 (ii) of 2016/17) and is now due for review. In accordance with the Policy, the Town Clerk handles all requests from the media (relating to Council business as a whole) and offers prompt and factual information only. This seems to work well for Epping Town Council's media relations.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Epping Town Council's Media Policy should be APPROVED as the Media Policy for Epping Town Council, with no amendments.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this RECOMMENDATION and **DECIDE** what to do.

**19 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (Attachment M)**

Epping Town Council's Social Media Policy (**Attachment M**) was ADOPTED by Council at the Ordinary meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 (Minute #537 (ii) of 2016/17) and is now due for review. No issues have arisen to warrant any changes to this Policy, but given the evolutionary nature of social media, this should be reviewed if any issues/advances become apparent.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Epping Town Council's Social Media Policy should be APPROVED as the Social Media Policy for Epping Town Council, with no amendments.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this RECOMMENDATION and **DECIDE** what to do.

**20 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY (Attachment N)**

Epping Town Council's Community Engagement Policy (**Attachment N**) was ADOPTED by Council at the Ordinary meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017 (Minute #64 (iv) of 2017/18) and is now due for review. The Town Clerk has made some revisions to this policy, based on more up-to-date practices, where more widespread community engagement is undertaken (particularly in relation to funding).

**RECOMMENDATION:** Epping Town Council's Community Engagement Policy should be APPROVED as the Community Engagement Policy for Epping Town Council, with the amendments highlighted.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this RECOMMENDATION and **DECIDE** what to do.

**21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**22 INSURANCE POLICIES (CONTRACTS) & RECONCILIATION**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Government Act 1972 s111 ; Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members & Officers ) order 2004

Council awarded a three-year contract to Zurich Municipal from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 (Minute #369 of 2014/15). Council awarded a three-year contract to WPS Brokers (RSA Insurance Group PLC and ERS Motor Insurance) on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 (Minute #520 of 2017/18). Council were given an extra three months cover with this policy (review 1<sup>st</sup> July of each year). This enables the insurance providers to divert some of their business from the traditional 1<sup>st</sup> April review dates, but also gave Council three months 'free cover'.

Council review the policy annually to ensure it is adequate for Council's needs and covers assets, but the provider and policy remain the same for those three years, apart from operational changes and amendments. The reviews will now take place just prior to July rather than April, so the figures are not ready at the current time.

Insurance Premium Tax is currently 12% (this could change during the coming months as it is set by Government). The insurance premium for 2018/19 was £9,035.77, plus £500 for inspections.

Council's assets must be recorded in an Asset Register which forms part of the externally audited Annual Return each year. It is necessary to ensure the current levels of insurance are adequate for Council's assets on an annual basis.

The Town Clerk will provide an insurance reconciliation and annual review figures at the June Council meeting, in preparation for the 1<sup>st</sup> July review date.

Please note: the total approved budget for insurance 2019/20 is £9,860.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **DECIDE** if any further action is required at the current time.

**23 DATA PROTECTION (GDPR) OFFICER (Attachment O)**

Epping Town Council appointed a Data Protection (GDPR) Officer for May 2018 (Minute #514 of 2017/18 refers). This was the Local Government Public Advisory Service (LGPAS) and was to be reviewed after one year.

The Town Clerk is pleased to report that to date, Epping Town Council, have not been the subject of any known data breaches. Council's Data Protection (GDPR) Officers have dealt with a number of data breaches elsewhere and they can be complex and time consuming, as well as very problematic. Details of these and some implications relating to Brexit are provided as per **Attachment O**.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** whether to RECOMMEND to Council continuing with the external Data Protection Officer (GDPR) for a further year.

**24 STAFF TERMS & CONDITIONS/PAYSCALES (Attachment P)**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Government Act 1972, s112

Epping Town Council staff are governed by the terms and conditions of the NJC (National Joint Council) (set by NALC and SLCC). The current staff pay scales are listed as per **Attachment P**.

Staff received a salary review in April 2018 for 2018/19 and 2019/20. These arrived after the budget setting process for 2018/19 but in time for the 2019/20 budgets, so more accurate calculations were possible for 2019/20. Please note the rebanding or restating of pay grades from 2019. This is a restating only, with the financial implications remaining comparable to previous terms (this is to remove any scales points that would be below minimum wage).

In 2019, the salary review equates to approximately 2% for staff on scale points 18-49, 3-4% for those from SCP14-17 and up to 6% for staff on scale points 6-14. This is to continue to close larger earning gaps between different pay scales. These are larger increases than were originally anticipated.

Committee is requested to **NOTE** this information.

25 **STAFFING MATTERS**

(Attachment Q)

**Statutory Basis:** Local Government Act 1972, s112

The Town Clerk has provided an update on staffing matters as per **Attachment Q**.

Committee is requested to **CONSIDER** this information and **DECIDE** if any further action is required.

26 **TOWN CLERK APPRAISAL**

**Statutory Basis:** Local Government Act 1972, s112

The Town Clerk was formally appointed Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 (Minute #392 of 2016/17).

The Town Clerk's Review and Development is now due and will be undertaken in February/March.

The Review and Development process for the Town Clerk will be completed by the Chairman of Council (Cllr Nigel Avey: 2018-19) and the Chairman of the Task & Finish Personnel Committee (Cllr Mrs B Scruton).

Committee are requested to **NOTE** this information and **DECIDE** if any further action is necessary at this time.

**(NB: The matters on this agenda have a statutory basis under the Local Government Act 1972 in sections 101 and 111, in addition to those stated.)**