



Theydon Bois Parish Council

Parish Office, The Village Hall, Coppice Row,
Theydon Bois, Essex CM16 7ER

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Julia Gale
Assistant Clerk to the Council: Mrs Sarah Gysbers

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of the Council held at the Village Hall 7:30pm on Thursday 30th January 2025

Councillors Present: Cllrs Gooch (Chairman), Amos, Blake, Burn, Cowup, Gill, Hannibal, Morton, and Purkiss.

Officers Present: Mrs Julia Gale, Clerk to the Council

Members of the Public: The meeting was attended by 4 members of the public.

1761. Apologies for Absence. None.

1761. Apologies for Lateness. Cllr Burn.

1763. To discuss and approve the minutes from 28th November 2024. [Approved](#)

1764. Disclosure of Interests with regard to specific items on the agenda (existence of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or existence and Nature of other Pecuniary Interest or a Non-pecuniary Interest).
[None.](#)

1765. Public Participation session with regard to specific items on the Agenda. [None.](#)

1766. Police report from PC Cook.

November 2024-January 2025 there have been the following reported crimes:

- Theft from motor vehicle in Station Approach.
- Theft of Motor vehicle in Abridge Road, Theydon Park Road, Coppice Row, outside Tesco.
- Criminal damage to motor vehicle, Thrifts Mead.
- Burglary in Forest Drive, Abridge Road, Hills Road.
- Racially aggravated incident outside Tesco.
- Serious assault in Station Hill.

Cllr Burn joined the meeting at 7.40pm.

1767. Clerks Report.

A Resident came into the office complaining about speeding in all main roads in Theydon- especially Loughton Lane.

Covid Day of Reflection – St Mary’s Church will be marking with prayers at their service on 9th March. Match funding is available from the Department of Health and Social Care for defibrillators. £750 for external defibrillators and £660 for internal defibrillators. Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) have intimated they may be able to help with the match funding.

A message of thanks came into the office, from Mrs Wakelin who borrowed a wheelchair under our free hire scheme. She was very grateful.

CCTV has been busy this month, with 3 requests from police for footage.

1768. Reports from District/County Councillors.

1768.1 Cllr Holly Whitbread reported on the push for Unitary Authorities from Central Government. Essex County Council has expressed to the government its interest in joining the first wave of devolution, with unitary authorities and a Mayor of Essex. The mayor would be responsible for – Public Transport, Health and Investment,(reporting directly to central government), with everything else devolved locally. Cllr Whitbread suggested that savings would be made as there would be less Executives, Councillors etc. By going in the first wave, they would have more say in the shape of the Unitary Authority.

Cllr Whitbread reported that Essex Highways have spent a lot of money on local roads. There is a Local Highways Panel (LHP) scheme in train for sign renewal in Coppice Row.

EFDC have had to make savings of £1.45 million in their budget, they are setting a precept increase of 2.99%.

Cllr Gooch asked what would happen to Planning in the new Unitary set up, Cllr Whitbread said that this is a worry. especially with the new rules on green belt and grey belt, and whether decisions would happen locally.

Cllr Amos reported that discussions have been held at District about government devolution. There is a shortfall in the budget and a final discussion will be held on 20th February to set the final budget.

1769. Reports from Parish Council Representatives on outside organisations.

1769. Cllr Burn attended the Local Councils’ Liaison Committee ('LCLC') meeting. held at EFDC, on 21st November 2024. A number of planning-related issues were raised, including the suggested provision of a dedicated Principal Planning Officer for Appeals, given the number of major applications that proceed to an Informal Hearing. However, Mr Richardson (Head of Planning Services) advised that EFDC now has a full complement of Planning Officers, without reliance on agency-based employees.

Training Sessions are now being held for District Councillors (being, primarily, those allocated to Planning Committees A and B), although other Ward Councillors, and Local Councillors, are also to be offered the opportunity to attend. Ward Councillors Clive Amos and Sue Jones, together with Parish Councillors from our Planning Committee, have already attended two sessions; the first in relation to

Viability Assessments, the second with respect to the recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') of December 2024.

With regard to the implementation of the new Planning Committees and Protocols, introduced in the autumn of 2024, EFDC is to undertake a review in May 2025. As requested at the meeting, Local Councils will also now be afforded the opportunity to comment at that time.

A new Clerks' Forum was mentioned, with its first meeting due to take place in early February 2025. The structure of the Epping Forest Branch of the EALC will be discussed, but Local Councillors will still be present, along with their Clerks, at meetings of the LCLC, to put questions to District and County Councillors, Portfolio Holders, and Officers of EFDC.

1771. Discussion regarding future of Theydon Bois Playground, lack of interest from volunteers.

Nik O'Flynn, trustee of the Playground at Theydon, was invited to speak. She advised that the situation had improved since this item was put on the agenda. One person has come forward to join the committee. Bev Soutar, who was sitting in the public gallery, also offered to join and help. Cllr Gill volunteered his daughter-in-law and said that she may be able to help as well. Nik has agreed to come back in a months' time and give an update.

1770. Finance Committee.

1770.1 To Approve payments since last meeting. [Approved.](#)

1770.2 To approve slight amendment to Parish Council Budget for 2025/26 following Government National Insurance Increase. Cllr Amos Proposed, Cllr Cowup Seconded. [Approved.](#)

1770.3 To approve Parish Council Precept for 2025/26.

Cllr Hannibal set out the Finance Committee case for increasing the Precept demand by 9% for the coming Financial Year, this would equate to an increase of £13472.37 or £6.71 per annum for a Band D property. A Precept demand of £163,165. Cllr Cowup Proposed, Cllr Burn Seconded. [Approved.](#)
[Cllr Gooch and Mrs Gale signed the Precept letter.](#)

1770.3 To approve appointment of new Internal Auditor "Mulberry Local Authority Service Ltd". [Approved.](#)

1770.4 To review and approve Standing Orders pending full update after NALC update. [Approved.](#)

1770.4 To note Internal Auditors report. [Noted.](#)

1770.4 To review and Approve Risk Management Schedule. [Approved.](#)

1773. Planning Committee.

Cllr Burn read out a report:

Since the previous Full Council Meeting on 28th November 2024, the Planning Committee has considered 9 Full Planning Applications, one Tree Preservation Order, and noted one Non-Material Amendment to a grant of planning permission.

The Committee did not raise any objections, although three of its no-objection returns to Epping Forest District Council ('EFDC') were subject to the inclusion of specified Conditions in any grant of planning permission. The Committee was also unable to form a view on two further applications due to the lack of sufficient information being provided, and commented on these to EFDC's Officers accordingly.

There have also been 3 decisions taken by EFDC on planning applications to which the Parish Council had objected – one being a grant of planning permission for a replacement dwelling, visible from the Buxton Trust Playing Field (which was granted, subject to further Conditions), whilst refusal was given with respect to 2 planning applications in the Green Belt. The first was that for a Padel and Tennis Court facility on open land, accessible from Abridge Road but within Blunts Farm (which was refused by EFDC's Planning Committee B), the other for a proposal to extend a bungalow near Theydon Road. An Appeal was allowed against EFDC's refusal of planning permission for a householder extension in Woburn Avenue.

Cllrs Gooch and Purkiss attended a meeting with Essex County Council ('ECC') to discuss the latter's advice re planning application EPF/1602/22 - for 'Change of use of agricultural buildings at Blunts Farm to B8 storage and associated development' – on which EFDC reconsulted with the Parish Council in October 2024.

EFDC's Development Management Services have also given presentations to District and Town/Parish Council members at two training sessions, the latter of which related to recent revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') of December 2024. These sessions were attended by Ward Councillors representing Theydon Bois with Passingford, and by members of the Planning Committee at Parish level. The District Council is to consider whether it wishes to adopt Civil Infrastructure Levy (CIL) arrangements to secure financial payments from developers, whilst further Government guidance is awaited on the interpretation of 'Grey Belt' and how this may affect any future Green Belt Review.

1774. Highways, Cemetery and Environment Committee.

1774.1 To receive an update on Highways, Cemetery and Environment matters within the Village.

Cllr Purkiss updated the meeting.

- The water leak outside the Chip shop in Forest Drive has now been repaired.
- The two drains that had sunk near the golf course have been repaired.
- Harringtons, the Parish Contractors, filled in a pothole and repaired the road near the Balti in Station Approach.
- Works in Graylands are due to start in March.
- A letter has been sent to Tesco asking for pavement repairs outside their shop.

- Station Hill is to close soon for Affinity Water to repair a water leak
- The cemetery hedges have been flailed.
- Four potholes have opened up near the golf course in Theydon Road.
- The bell mouths of certain roads in Theydon need re-doing and Cllr Purkiss will be pursuing this with highways.

1775 Community Engagement Committee.

1775.1 To receive an update on community matters within the village.

Cllr Cowup updated the meeting.

- The Christmas Market was a great success. We raised £1684.31 in total for Voluntary Action Epping Forest Community Clubs. A vote of thanks was recorded for Mrs Sarah Gysbers for all her hard work.
- The litter pick in January was attended by 12 people plus the local MP. There is a group of 25 people who turn up at different picks overall. This Saturday there is a litter pick, all are invited to take part.
- On 21st January the Warm Event was held in the Church Hall. It wasn't as well attended as hoped. Over the whole 4 hours, 25 people turned up. Essex police, Fire and The Limes all came along and have promised to come if there is an event next year.
- An Emergency Volunteer training session was held on 22nd. This was the second training session. there are now 24 fully trained volunteers in the village. Next steps there is to be a skills audit, a session when all the volunteers will meet as a group, and a training exercise. Lisa at EFDC will hopefully set this up. A grab box will have to be set up and held in the office for use in an emergency.

Cllr Gill reported on the Repair Café. The first Repair Café/Community Cuppa of the year was held. It was well attended, with 55 people, 45 attendees and 10 volunteers.

1776 Any Other Urgent Business for report (without decision).

1776.2 Cllr Blake mentioned an item she had seen about Bleed Kits. She thought it was a good idea to investigate getting one for the village.

1777. Public Participation session with regard to items of interest to the Parish.

A resident spoke about the noise problem in Forest Drive from Motor bikes. An Enforcement Notice has been served, but an appeal is underway. The Parish Council will investigate helping if it can.

Meeting closed at 9.35pm

Signed: Cllr P Gooch Chair

Dated: 27th February 2025