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**Introduction to the
Committee Management System (CoMS)
Public Version**

Date: Revised October 2005



Epping Forest District Council

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If you have any problems with these instructions or have comments to make on how they can be made clearer, please contact Simon Hill on 01992 564249

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Committee Management System (CoMS) provides information relating to Councillors, meetings of the Council and information relating Councillor activities (E.g. outside bodies).

1.2 What does it achieve?

The system has been introduced to speed up the process for compiling agendas, reports and minutes and to make it easier for all Members of the Council, staff and members of the public to access such documents and information about the Council and its Committees.

1.3 Who can use the system?

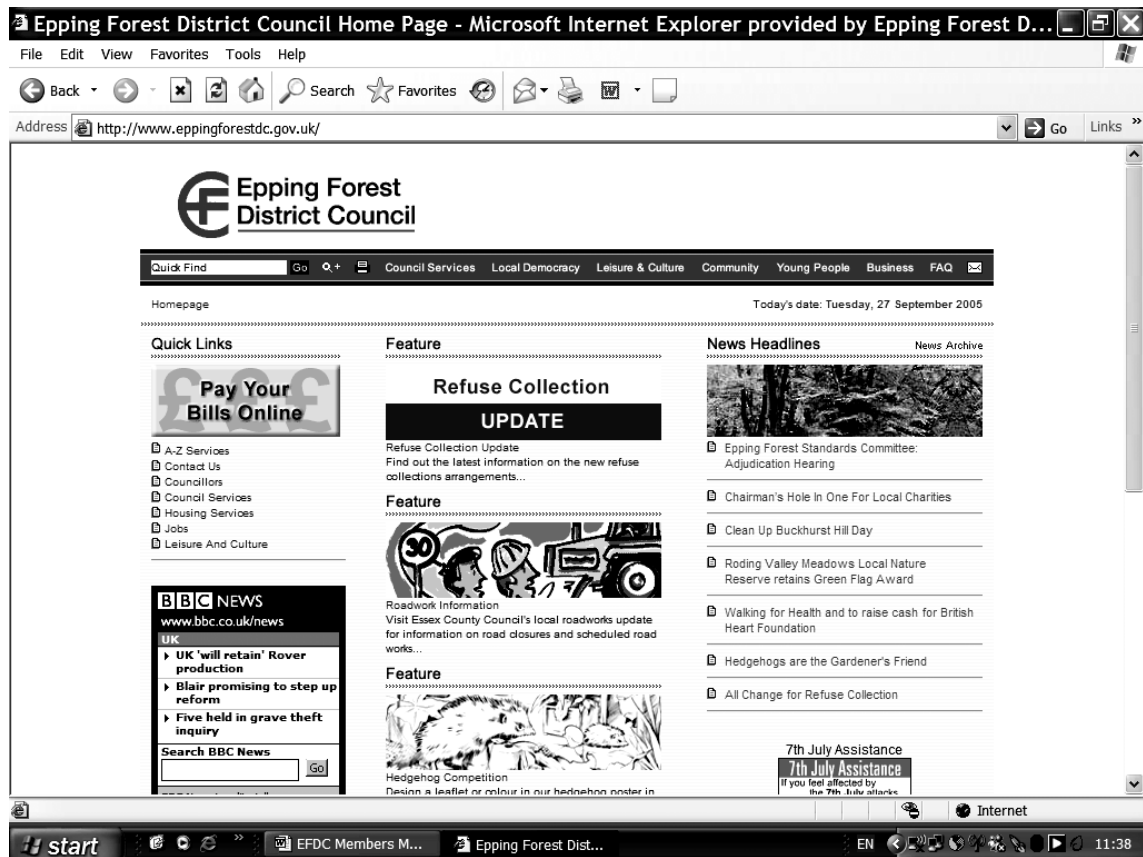
The system is open for use by all. The system is accessed from the homepage of the Council's internet site. All users must abide by the user policy appended to this manual.

1.4 Where to find the CoMS system

Log onto the Council's Website at:

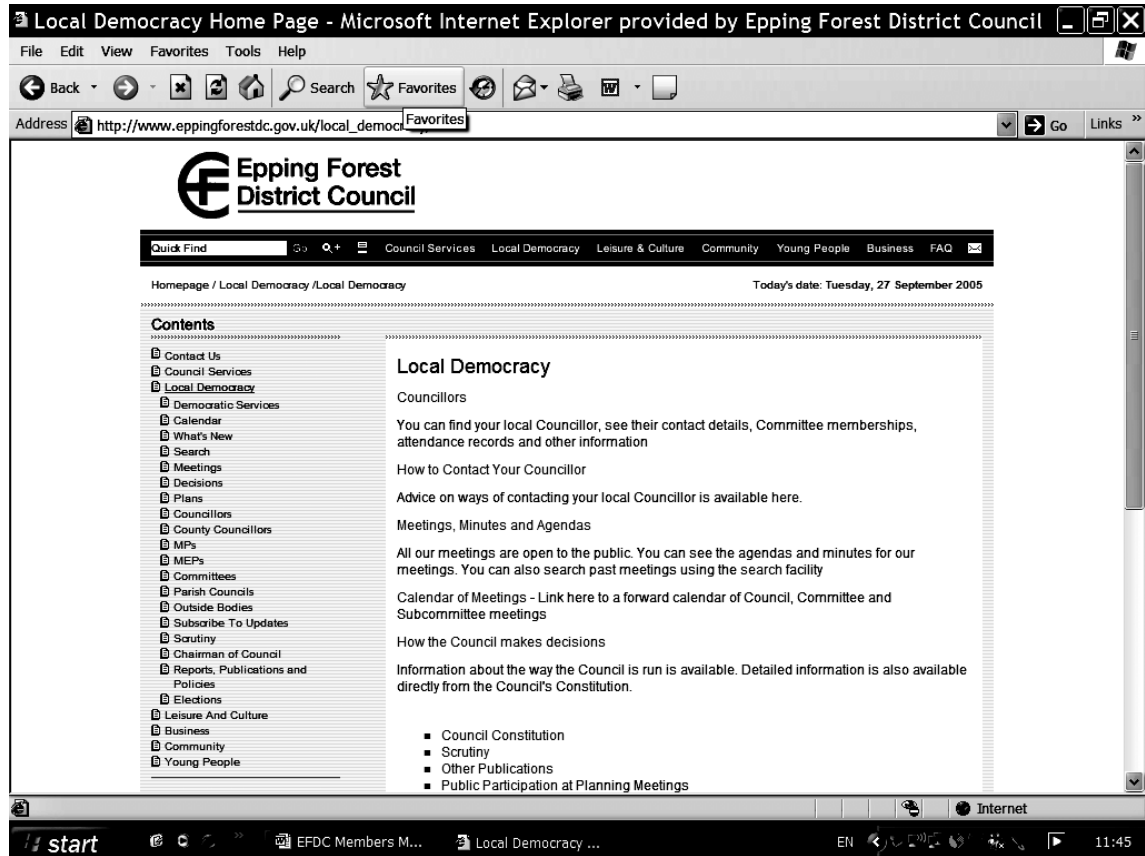
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

the following screen will appear:



In the title bar click on 'local democracy'

The following screen will appear:

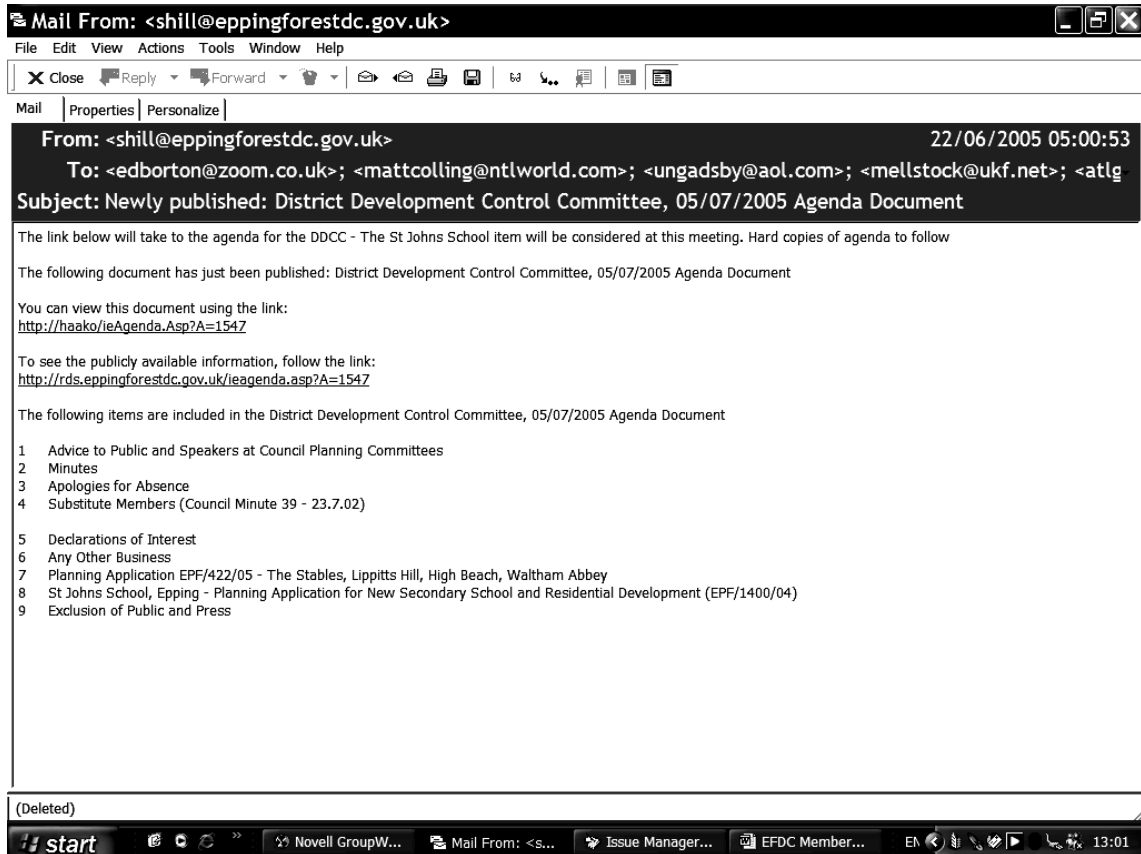


You are now in the new system and have access to all the information through the links down the left hand side of the page or through the links in green on the page.

Information that is available to members of the public is accessible via the Council's web site; however exempt information will not be accessible.

2. How does the system work?

When documents are published by the Council, you can receive an e-mail notification. When you receive this notification it will look like this:



The two blue underlined sections give a direct link to the intranet and internet agendas.

The email also lists items for consideration at the meeting.

However it is also possible, by clicking on the What's New link on the menu bar on the left hand side, to view the most recent and up to date developments as follows:

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Epping Forest District Council website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/local_democracy/default.asp?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Ffrds.eppingforestdc.gov.uk%2Fmg/whatsNew.asp. The website header features the council's logo and a navigation menu with links for Council Services, Local Democracy, Leisure & Culture, Community, Young People, Business, and FAQ. A 'Quick Find' search box is also present. The main content area is titled 'What's New' and includes a date range selector (set to 20/04/2005 - 27/04/2005), a committee dropdown menu (set to 'All'), and a wards dropdown menu (set to '(any)'). A 'Find' button is located below these filters. The 'Events' section lists several recent activities:

- 27/04/2005** - Meeting Scheduled: Apr 27 2005 7:30PM, Area Plans Subcommittee A
- 26/04/2005** - Meeting Scheduled: Apr 26 2005 7:30PM, District Development Control Committee
- 25/04/2005** - Meeting Held: Apr 25 2005 7:00PM, Cabinet
- 25/04/2005** - Agenda Published: Meeting of May 3 2005 7:30PM, Area Plans Subcommittee B
- 25/04/2005** - Minutes Published: Meeting of Apr 6 2005 7:30PM, Area Plans Subcommittee B
- 21/04/2005** - Agenda Supplement Published: Finance and Performance MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: Meeting of Apr 25 2005 7:00PM, Cabinet
- 21/04/2005** - Meeting Held: Apr 21 2005 12:00AM, Licensing Sub-Committee
- 20/04/2005** - Meeting Held: Apr 20 2005 7:30PM, Area Plans Subcommittee D

Below the list, there is a note: 'Click one of the arrows to select a different period'. The footer of the page provides contact information: information@eppingforestdc.gov.uk, Telephone (01902) 564000 (main switchboard), and © 2005 Epping Forest District Council. It also includes links for Home Page, Disclaimer, Privacy Policy, and Site Statistics. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including 'Issue Manager - [View A...', 'Novell GroupWise - Mailbox', 'Local Democracy - ML...', and 'EFDC Members and Offic...'. The system clock shows 10:54.

The information published in the current week will automatically appear. You can use the arrow keys to change the dates to the week you are interested in.

By clicking on the link (highlighted in blue and underlined), you will be taken straight into the document which will appear as follows:

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Epping Forest District Council website. The address bar shows the URL: <http://haako/elistDocuments.asp?CommitteeId=0&CF=Area+Plans+Subcommittee+AGMeetingId=1529&DF=8&Ver=4>. The page header features the Epping Forest District Council logo and a navigation menu with links for Council Services, Local Democracy, Leisure & Culture, Community, Young People, Business, and FAQ. A 'Quick Find' search box is also present. The main content area is titled 'Agenda' and is for the 'Area Plans Subcommittee A' meeting on Wednesday, 27th April, 2005 at 7.30 pm. It lists three downloadable documents: 'Attendance Details' (PDF 166 K), 'Agenda Frontsheet' (PDF 40 K), and 'Agenda Reports Pack' (PDF 3 M). Below this, the venue is listed as Roding Valley High School, Brook Road, Loughton, and the contact is Zoe Folley. A section titled 'Items' contains a numbered list of agenda items, each with a PDF icon and size. Item 1 is 'Advice to Public and Speakers at Council Planning Subcommittees' (PDF 166 K), with a note that general advice is attached and an 'Additional documents' link to a PDF of 11 K. Item 2 is 'Apologies for Absence'. Item 3 is 'Minutes' (PDF 10 K), with a note to confirm the minutes of the last meeting and an 'Additional documents' link to a PDF of 16 K. Item 4 is 'Substitute Members (Council Minute 39 - 23.7.02)', with a note that the Head of Research and Democratic Services will report on appointments. Item 5 is 'Declarations of Interest', with a note that the Head of Research and Democratic Services will declare interests. Item 6 is 'Any Other Business', with a note about the Local Government Act 1972. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including 'Issue Manager', 'Novell GroupWise', and 'Ongar Leisure Centre'.

You then have a number of options (starting at the top left of the screen):

1. [Attendance Details](#) - gives details of all Councillors who are expected to attend
2. [Agenda Frontsheet](#) –shows the front page of the agenda.
3. [Agenda Reports Pack](#)- provides a full electronic version of the whole agenda in PDF format.

Alternatively, if you are interested in a particular report only or in a particular section of the agenda, scroll down the page and click on the appropriate link.

3. Councillors' Details

3.1 Viewing the Councillors' Details

To view information on Councillors, click on "Councillors" on the contents menu on the left of the screen.



These can be viewed alphabetically, by political party or by ward. Click on the appropriate link.

To search for a Councillor - type in part of the councillor's name and press the go button.

To see more information about a Councillor click on their picture and this will display:-

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Epping Forest District Council website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/local_democracy/default.asp?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.eppingforestdc.gov.uk%2FmgUserInfo.asp%3FUID%3D35. The website header features the Epping Forest District Council logo and a "web development" banner. A navigation menu includes links for Council Services, Local Democracy, Leisure & Culture, Community, Young People, Business, and FAQ. The main content area is titled "Councillor Reg Chidley" and features a black and white portrait of the councillor. Below the photo, the following information is displayed:

- Party:** Independent
- Ward:** Waltham Abbey Paternoster
- Other Councillors supporting this ward:** Councillor Richard Haines
- More information about this councillor:**
 - o Attendance Record
 - o Declarations at Meetings
 - o Register of Interests

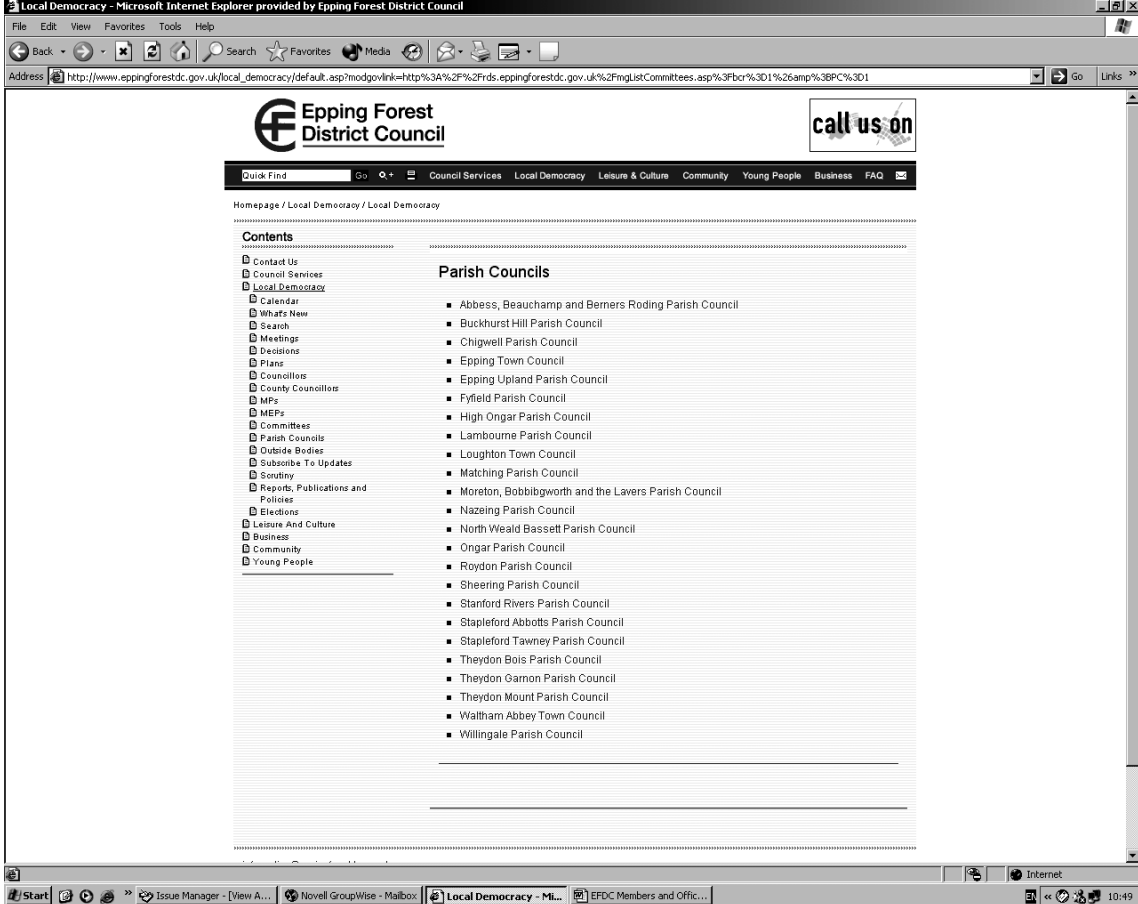
Below this information, there are sections for "Contact Information" and "Committee Appointments", both of which are currently blank. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including "Issue Manager", "Novell GroupWise - Mailbox", "Local Democracy - Mi...", and "EFDC Members and Offic...". The system clock in the bottom right corner indicates the time is 10:47.

Details of the chosen member are shown including:

Name, ward, other Councillors in the same ward, attendance, declarations, register of interests, contact information, appointments and term of office

4. Parish Council Details

To view the Parish Council details, Click on "Parish Councils" in the contents menu.



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Epping Forest District Council website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/local_democracy/defaut.asp?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Ffrds.eppingforestdc.gov.uk%2FmgListCommittees.asp%3Fbcr%3D1%26amp%3BPC%3D1. The website header features the Epping Forest District Council logo and a "call us on" button. A navigation menu includes "Quick Find", "Council Services", "Local Democracy", "Leisure & Culture", "Community", "Young People", "Business", and "FAQ". The main content area is titled "Homepage / Local Democracy / Local Democracy" and contains a "Contents" sidebar and a "Parish Councils" list. The "Contents" sidebar lists various categories such as "Contact Us", "Council Services", "Local Democracy", "Calendar", "What's New", "Search", "Meetings", "Decisions", "Plans", "Councillors", "County Councillors", "MPs", "MEPs", "Committees", "Parish Councils", "Outside Bodies", "Subscribe To Updates", "Scrutiny", "Reports, Publications and Policies", "Elections", "Leisure And Culture", "Business", "Community", and "Young People". The "Parish Councils" list includes the following names: Abbess, Beauchamp and Berners Roding Parish Council; Buckhurst Hill Parish Council; Chigwell Parish Council; Epping Town Council; Epping Upland Parish Council; Fyfield Parish Council; High Ongar Parish Council; Lambourne Parish Council; Loughton Town Council; Mathing Parish Council; Moreton, Bobbitgworth and the Lavers Parish Council; Nazeing Parish Council; North Weald Bassett Parish Council; Ongar Parish Council; Roydon Parish Council; Sheering Parish Council; Stanford Rivers Parish Council; Stapleford Abbots Parish Council; Stapleford Tawney Parish Council; Theydon Bois Parish Council; Theydon Garmon Parish Council; Theydon Mount Parish Council; Waltham Abbey Town Council; and Willingale Parish Council.

For more information click on the Parish Council name.

5. Calendar

To display a list of meetings, Click on “Calendar”

The Calendar can be displayed either in a monthly view, by clicking on “Month”

The screenshot shows the Epping Forest District Council website in Microsoft Internet Explorer. The page title is "Local Democracy - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Epping Forest District Council". The address bar shows the URL: http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/local_democracy/default.asp?modgovlink=http://rds.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/imgCalendarMonthView.asp?3FGL%3D1. The website header includes the council logo and the phone number 020 8960 9400. A navigation menu contains links for Council Services, Local Democracy, Leisure & Culture, Community, Young People, Business, and FAQ. A "Contents" sidebar lists various services like Contact Us, Council Services, Local Democracy, Calendar, Meetings, etc. The main content area is titled "Calendar" and includes options for "Printer Friendly View" and "Weekend View". Below these are dropdown menus for "Month: April" and "Year: 2005", with a "Go" button and "Earlier - Later" links. The calendar is displayed in a monthly view for April 2005, with tabs for "Week" and "Month". The calendar grid shows the following meetings:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
28 Bank Holiday	29 7.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 29/03	30 7.30 pm Area Plans Subcommittee A 30/03	31	1
4 4.00 pm Housing Appeals Panel 04/04	5 6.00 pm Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group 05/04 7.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 05/04	6 7.30 pm Area Plans Subcommittee B 06/04	7 7.30 pm Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 07/04	8
11	12	13 7.30 pm Area Plans Subcommittee C 13/04	14	15
18 6.00 pm Finance and	19 7.30 pm Council	20 7.30 pm Area	21 Licensing Sub-	22

Or in a weekly view, by clicking on “Week” on the Calendar Document

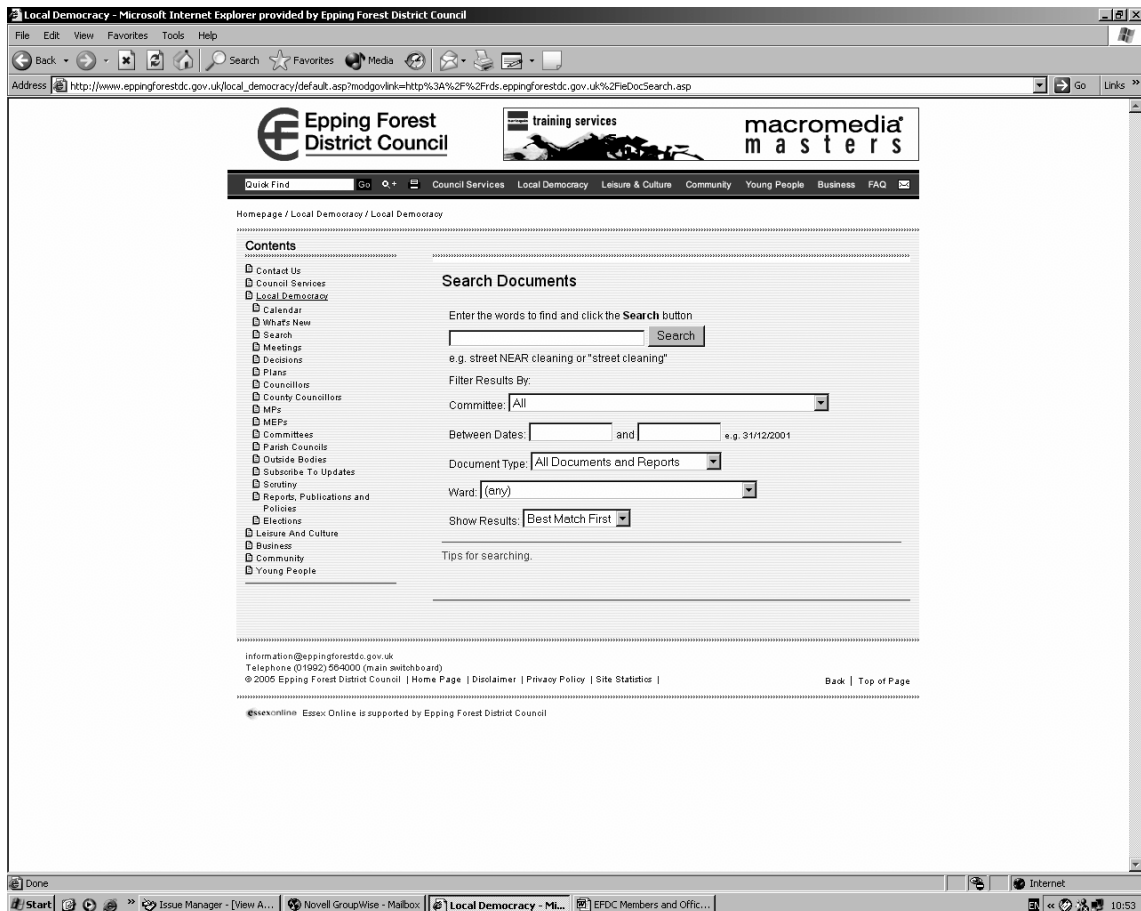
To find out more information about a meeting, click on the name of the meeting in the calendar.

The Calendar also works back to the year 2000.

6. Accessing Information

6.1 Searching for Documents

Click on “Search” in the contents menu on the left of the screen.



Text Searching

You can search for words or phrases that relate to the information you are looking for in the top box on this screen. The information can be typed in as a phrase or as keywords.

For help Click on “Tips for Searching” at the bottom of the screen. One method is to put quotation marks around keywords if you want the search to take them literally. For instance, if you type the following query:

“Willingale Road Allotments” the search will literally look for the complete phrase Willingale Road Allotments. But if you type the same query without the quotation marks, all documents are searched for the words individually and will show all references.

This will bring you to the “Browse Meetings” screen:

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the Epping Forest District Council website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/local_democracy/default.asp?modgovlink=http%3A%2F%2Ffrds.eppingforestdc.gov.uk%2FfileListMeetings.asp%3FCommitteeId%3D297%26amp%3BCF%3DArea%2BPlans%2BSubcommit. The website header features the Epping Forest District Council logo and a 'call us on' button. A navigation menu includes links for Council Services, Local Democracy, Leisure & Culture, Community, Young People, Business, and FAQ. The main content area is titled 'Browse Meetings' and is for the 'Area Plans Subcommittee A, 2005'. It includes a 'Meetings for 2005' dropdown menu and a list of meeting dates and times. Below the list, there is information about the committee, its membership, and public speaking rules.

Epping Forest District Council

call us on

Quick Find Go Council Services Local Democracy Leisure & Culture Community Young People Business FAQ

Homepage / Local Democracy / Local Democracy

Contents

- Contact Us
- Council Services
- Local Democracy
- Calendar
- Whats New
- Search
- Meetings
- Decisions
- Plans
- Councillors
- County Councillors
- MEPs
- Committees
- Parish Councils
- Outside Bodies
- Subscribe To Updates
- Southern
- Reports, Publications and Policies
- Elections
- Leisure And Culture
- Business
- Community
- Young People

Browse Meetings

Area Plans Subcommittee A, 2005

Meetings for 2005 Go

2 Mar 2005 7.30 pm
30 Mar 2005 7.30 pm - Agenda, Minutes
27 Apr 2005 7.30 pm - Agenda
15 Jun 2005 7.30 pm
13 Jul 2005 7.30 pm
10 Aug 2005 7.30 pm
7 Sep 2005 7.30 pm
5 Oct 2005 7.30 pm
2 Nov 2005 7.30 pm
30 Nov 2005 7.30 pm

Information About the Committee

This subcommittee considers planning applications, planning enforcement and tree preservation issues in the south of the district area.

Area covered includes Buckhurst Hill, Loughton and Chigwell.

The subcommittee has a membership of 15 Councillors who represent wards in the area. It meets at Roding Valley High School, Loughton at 7.30 p.m. every fourth Wednesday.

Public Speaking is allowed at these meetings. For more information see our leaflet 'Your Choice, Your Voice?' or the agenda.

Its parent committee is the District Development Control Committee.

Click on the meeting date required, or change the selected year

To view further information about a particular meeting, click on the meeting date.

6.3 Exempt Reports

Certain reports published by the Council are not available to the public because they contain information that falls into “confidential” categories set out in the Local Government Acts.

6.4 Forward Plans

Forward Plans are in the development stage and will be released shortly.

6.5 Decisions

To view Decisions

Select **Decisions**, from the Contents menu,

Select the parameters for the **date published** by clicking the arrows

Select **Decision Makers** from the drop down list

Select a **Decision Status** from the drop down list (any/for call-in/approved/to be reconsidered)

The screen will show decisions made within the timescale specified, the date the decision was published, the last date for call-in and how many Members have called the decision in, if any.

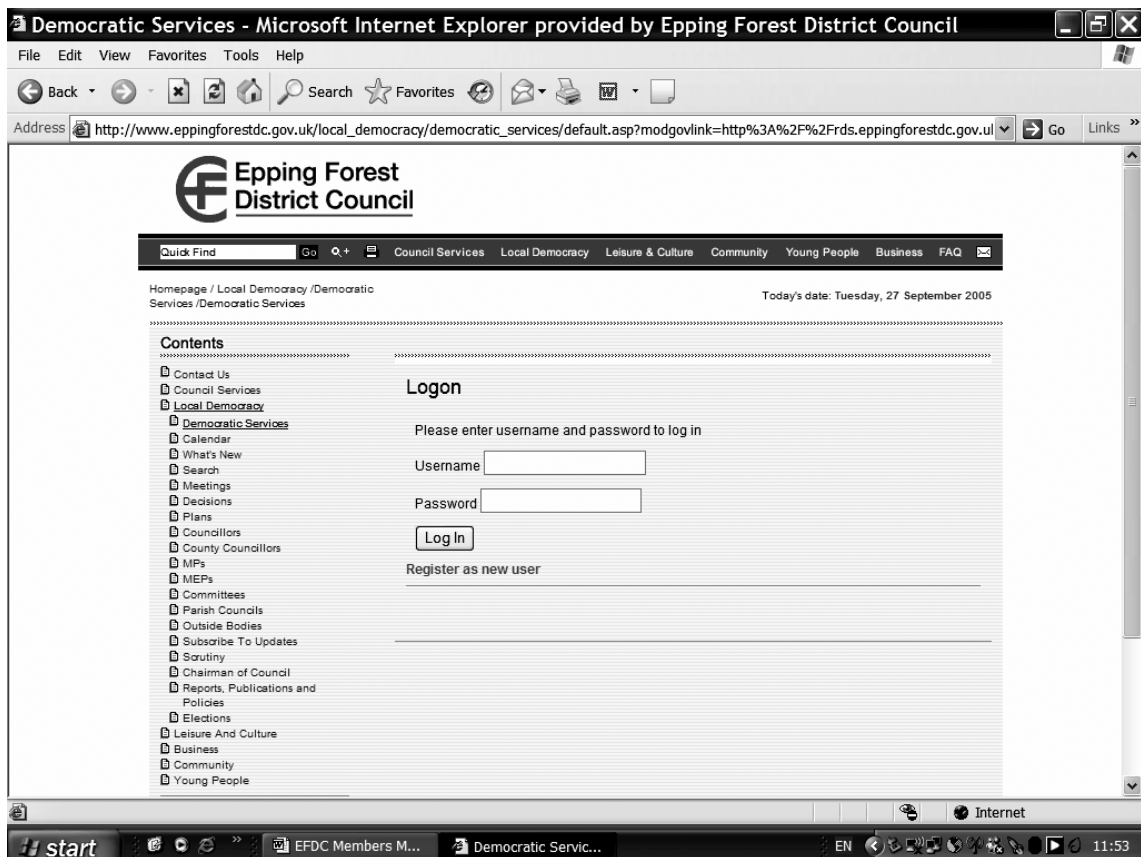
To view the decision click on the highlighted title. The Decision Details are displayed

7. Subscribe to Updates

To subscribe to updates and receive an email informing you that your chosen topic is to be considered and/or your chosen ward will be affected by an issue:

Click on “Subscribe to Updates”

The following screen will appear:



If you are a new user click on Register as a new user and enter details as requested.

Click on Keywords, Wards or Committees you wish to be kept informed of publication of reports or minutes.

Click submit a request for updates – emails will then be sent to you advising of the publication of relevant information.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Subscribe to Updates - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Epping Forest District Council". The address bar shows the URL: <http://haako/mgRegisterkeywordInterest.asp?bcr=1>. The page features the Epping Forest District Council logo and a navigation menu with links such as "Council Services", "Local Democracy", "Leisure & Culture", "Community", "Young People", "Business", and "FAQ".

The main content area is titled "Subscribe to Updates" and includes a section for "Subscriptions for shill" with the text: "Do you want to receive emails telling you about newly published documents? If so, tick those boxes below that interest you, and press **Submit**".

Below this are three sections for selecting interests:

- Keywords:** A list of checkboxes for various topics including Democracy, Financial Management, Housing, Human Resources, Information and Communication Technology, Leisure and Culture, Performance Management, Planning and Building Control, Scrutiny, and Transport and Highways.
- Committees:** A list of checkboxes for various committees, including Area Plans Subcommittee A, B, C, and D; Cabinet; Council; District Development Control Committee; Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee; Housing Appeals Panel; Joint Consultative Committee; Licensing Committee; Licensing Sub-Committee; Loughton Leisure Centre Cabinet Committee; and Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group.

On the left side of the page, there is a "Contents" menu with links to various site sections like Calendar, What's New, Search, Meetings, Decisions, Forward Plans, Councils, County Councillors, MPs, MEPs, Committees, Faith Councils, Outside Bodies, Library, and Work To Do.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications: "Issue Manager - [Manag...", "Novell GroupWise - Mailbox", "EFDC Members and Offic...", and "Subscribe to Updates ...". The system tray on the right shows the time as 11:14 and the text "Local intranet".

8. USER POLICY STATEMENT

The following statement sets out the framework for the use of the Committee Management System (COMs):

- Use of the system is restricted to normal business practices.
- All Users must use the Committee Management System in a professional and courteous manner.
- Users having access to the application 'Issue manager' must not misuse the system to the discredit of the Council or to corrupt the application or in any way intentionally effect the efficient operation of the Council's democratic processes.
- Adequate protections are in place to prevent Users viewing or downloading restricted material.
- The provisions of the Local Government Acts will be adhered to. No unauthorised transmission of any restricted document to parties external to the Council is permitted.
- Methods are in place for appropriate officers to have access to restricted documents which shall be the responsibility of the Head of Service to agree.
- Personal use of the system is not permitted without any express permission from the Council.
- Any Users found attempting to abuse the system will have their access rights revoked.
- Heads of Service will ultimately be responsible for ensuring there is no misuse of the system, software or hardware; by staff in their own service area.
- Users must adhere to other ICT related policies of the Council and all provisions in Staff related policies when using the COMs system.
- Use of the system via the internet site is governed by other policies.

This policy applies to all Users and all Users must comply with it.

Research and Democratic Services:

- (i) Is the owner and administrator of the system; and
- (ii) Manages the COMs system in accordance with this policy.

The Head of Research and Democratic Services is responsible for developing and maintaining this policy.

This policy does not breach your rights under the Human Rights Act or the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act.

This policy is effective from : 25 May 2005

Policy breaches

A breach of Council policy controlling the use of ICT/COMS services may result in restricted access to Council information technology resources. Also, disciplinary action may apply under other Council policies and guidelines.

Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees, Members, contractors and agents with either a Council owned or personally-owned computer or workstation used to connect to the Council's network or using their own hardware to access the system either from a VPN or the internet. This policy applies to remote access connections used to do work on behalf of the Council, including reading or sending email and viewing intranet/internet web resources.